

Qatar declines Iran defence pact offer

DOHA (R) — Qatar has politely declined an Iranian offer of a bilateral defence pact with the Islamic republic saying it was not necessary at this stage, Qatari officials said on Tuesday. "A suggestion came from our Iranian brethren that we should have a mutual defence treaty. But we told them that it was not needed at this stage," said a foreign ministry official. The suggestion came during talks Iran's Defence Minister Mohammad Forouzmand had with Qatari leaders including the emir, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, during a four-day visit which ended on Tuesday. Diplomats said Qatar's other allies like the United States, Britain and France with whom the oil and gas-rich emirate has comprehensive defence treaties and close political and security ties were baffled by the Iranian offer. Iran, whose influence in the Gulf diminished after the 1979 fall of the late Shah, was trying to "regain a foothold in the region" by befriending Qatar, a Western diplomat said. "But we know that Qatar, as a sovereign country, knows its best interest and will be wary of the Iranian design," he said.

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Cabinet approves new rule for land

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet on Tuesday held a meeting under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti during which it approved a regulation allowing the division of land to facilitate the issuance of separate title deeds in the name of the respective owners. Under the regulation plots of land owned by many owners can be divided into plots with a minimum of four dunums each. The new regulation will only be applied to unorganised areas located in Irbid, Jerash, Ajloun, Balqa and Madaba districts, in addition to several villages in the governorates of Zarqa, Mafraq, Karak and Tafleh and the Greater Amman Municipality area. Minister of Agriculture Mustafa Shneikat said the decision was aimed at solving problems emanating from the group ownership of land, noting that it only covers most of the plots of land located west of the Hijaz Railway, in addition to plots with limited areas.

Alfi: No talks with militants

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian Interior Minister Hassan Al Alfi ruled out on Tuesday any reconciliation dialogue with militants calling them murderers. "We refuse any kind of contact with these outlaw organisations or their accomplices, for there can be no dialogue with murderers, criminals and outlaws," Mr. Alfi told journalists. He denied there had been any call for a truce between the government and the Jamaa Al Islamiyah, the main militant faction in the four-year confrontation which has left 1,015 dead.

U.N. to give up on Sahara registration

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Secretary-General Boutros Ghali said Monday that he will recommend to the Security Council that the United Nations abandon its efforts to register voters in the Western Sahara for a referendum on the region's future. Dr. Ghali told reporters that he would make the recommendation within a few days because there "is no progress in the verification of the voters and we will be compelled to stop this."

Egyptian editor jailed for failing to pay fine

CAIRO (AFP) — The editor in chief of an Egyptian Islamic newspaper was jailed on Tuesday for failing to pay a fine incurred for slandering the son of Interior Minister Hassan Al Alfi. A higher court which heard his appeal on Tuesday said it would rule on the case on May 28, but ordered Mr. Hussein to pay the fine immediately. When Mr. Hussein said he could not pay, he was ordered imprisoned until the fine was paid, the sources said.

14 dead, 24 missing off Somali coast

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Some 14 bodies have been recovered and 24 others are still missing, and presumed dead, after a boat transporting more than 90 people to a ship anchored off the shark-infested Somali coastal port of Merca sank on Monday night. Port authorities in Merca, 100 kilometres south of Mogadishu, said Tuesday that the boat, overloaded with people going to off-load commercial goods from the vessel, anchored about a mile from the shore, was hit by a big wave and sank immediately.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday confers with Egyptian Prime Minister Kamal Jazouiri in a meeting attended by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti (photo by Yousef Allan)

Regent urges full-fledged agreement on free trade between Jordan, Egypt

Joint higher committee begins meetings

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday called for full-fledged free-trade agreement between Jordan and Egypt.

The Regent noted that the two countries were negotiating partnership agreements with the European Union and such accords would eventually require the application of free trade between the two countries on the one hand and between them and Europe on the other.

The Crown Prince was speaking during a working lunch with visiting Egyptian Prime Minister Kamal Jazouiri, who arrived Tuesday at the head of a delegation for the meeting of the joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee.

The meeting started Tuesday under the chairmanship of the prime ministers of the two countries.

The Regent referred to the next Middle East and North Africa summit on regional economic cooperation to be held in Cairo later this year and said the higher committee could prepare joint plans for regional projects to be submitted at the conference.

"We should intensify our efforts and coordinate our positions to move from the stage of discussions to the stage of execution of projects," said the Regent, adding that the two countries' experiences would benefit regional cooperation in an era of comprehensive peace.

The Crown Prince said Jordan and Egypt maintain excellent relations in all fields, especially in the recent years, which witnessed greater strides towards integration.

The meeting and the lunch were attended by the prime ministers of the two countries and committee members.

Before the meeting with the Regent, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and Dr. Jazouiri opened the committee meeting at the Prime Ministry. Both prime ministers stressed their countries' determination to promote trade, economic and social, industrial, touristic, and other relations with each other.

Mr. Kabariti said that Jordan and Egypt had a common strategy and both stand in the same trench in the peace process, in construction and regional development and in fighting all forms of violence and divisions among Arab countries.

Jordan, he said, seeks to heal rifts among Arab countries, opposes all trends towards hegemony, tutelage, interference in other countries' affairs and condemns all forms of aggression, violence and terrorism.

Calling for economic integration between Egypt and Jordan, Mr. Kabariti said despite the past achievements, the two countries had not yet achieved the requirements of the 21st century or catered to the needs of regional development. But, he added, through economic reforms and cooperation Egypt and Jordan were heading towards the fulfilment of their aspirations.

Referring to the committee's work, he said it was expected to endorse an agreement on preventing dual taxation and another on encouraging and protecting joint investments in addition to moves aimed at promoting

economic, trade, maritime, air and land transport, agricultural, cultural and touristic cooperation and electric power linkage in addition to cooperation in labour-related fields.

Dr. Jazouiri referred to the peace process, stressing that only when a comprehensive settlement was achieved, securing the restoration of all occupied territories, can the countries of the region enjoy stability and security.

Dr. Jazouiri said that Egypt supports a comprehensive peace, restoration of solidarity among Arab countries and backs Jordan's stand in the face of any military alliances in the region, which, he said, would endanger the peace process.

In its two-day meeting the higher committee will review a host of issues, which, among other things, include the stimulation of the role of the private sector and the chambers of trade and industry in the two countries.

Tuesday's meeting was prepared by a ministerial committee which issued a statement late Monday calling for gradual removal of all customs duty and other taxes on goods traded between Egypt and Jordan over a period of 10 years.

In an interview later Tuesday with representatives of the Egyptian media, Prince Hassan said scopes of cooperation were discussed more than a decade ago, noting that he himself had taken part in the discussions.

Prince Hassan said the Egyptian-Jordanian meeting in Amman "is a qualitative meeting, in view of the multi-

(Continued on page 7)

King holds talks with Kohl, voices appreciation of German assistance

BONN (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday held talks with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl on bilateral relations and means of enhancing them in the various fields.

The two leaders also discussed the situation in the Middle East and the latest developments of the peace process.

The King lauded Chancellor Kohl's and the German government's contribution to the peace process and thanked Germany for their economic aid to the Middle East countries, particularly Jordan, saying that such assistance will contribute to strengthening foundations of the peace process.

The King praised Chancellor Kohl's efforts to enhance bilateral relations, which are based on mutual confidence and respect. King Hussein voiced appreciation to Germany for its assistance to Jordan to carry out water projects.

(Continued on page 7)



German Chancellor Helmut Kohl gestures prior to talks with His Majesty King Hussein in Bonn on Tuesday (Reuters photo)

Palestinians and Israelis clash over land grabs

KALKILYA (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers firing rubber bullets and 300 Palestinian demonstrators clashed Tuesday on a second day of protests over land grabs on the West Bank near Israel's border.

An 11-year-old boy was slightly wounded in the hand by a rubber bullet, in the clash near Kalkilya.

Israeli border guards also fired tear-gas to disperse the crowd of almost 300 youths, who hurled stones and tried to stop bulldozers from flattening the earth.

The Palestinians are protesting against land confiscations by the army to build a security barrier between the Kalkilya region of the northern West Bank and Israel.

Ten Palestinians were shot and wounded Monday when Israeli soldiers opened fire with rubber bullets.

Former Palestinian commander Laila Khaleel, who hijacked two planes in 1969 and 1970 and returned from exile last month, led a protest against Israel on Tuesday.

Palestine in 3 years possibly with Jerusalem as capital - Peres aide

PARIS (AFP) — A senior aide to Israeli Premier Shimon Peres said in a magazine interview Tuesday he expects a Palestinian state to be established in three years, and suggested Jerusalem could be its capital.

Ron Pundak, in charge of negotiations on the final status of Jerusalem, told the French Weekly L'Express that "in three years, if all goes well, a Palestinian state will emerge."

Mr. Pundak, one of the main architects of the 1993 accord which launched Palestinian autonomy, made the suggestion about Jerusalem when asked if it could ever be the capital of both Israel and a new Palestinian state.

"It will cause a fuss, for me it is a certainty: in three years, if all goes well, a Palestinian state will emerge," he said. "And why would Jerusalem not be its capital?"

His comments came after Israeli and Palestinian negotiators opened talks the last stage of their peace process due to hammer out the final status of the territories over

the next three years.

Mr. Pundak acknowledged that the issue of Jerusalem was highly sensitive. "The symbolic charge of the city is such that we have to proceed with caution," he said. "For us, Israelis, Jerusalem is united and indivisible."

But he said one option being studied was of "the principle of an open city." This would mean "a city without walls, without borders, without ghettos," where "Jews, Muslims and Christians can move about from east to west and vice versa, to learn to live together and eventually to respect each other."

While refusing any question of returning to the pre-1967 lines when Israel also seized the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, he said two municipalities could co-exist, one Israeli and the other Arab. "We are considering two joint public bodies to deal with building, transport, social services and infrastructure."

"But where the Palestinian population is in the majority, a Palestinian municipality could administer things with-

out interference from Israeli authorities."

This would be "with the exception of places in the east of the city which would remain under the responsibility of Jewish administration," he said.

"The city will be managed to an Israeli municipal council which will delegate certain powers to a Palestinian mayor," he said.

Overall Mr. Pundak said that Israel's interest, although he stressed "while having its own government, administration and laws, (it) would be totally demilitarised, like Vatican City."

He said this "peace scenario" can only be implemented under two conditions: if there are never again any terrorist attacks, and if there is a genuine desire on the part of Palestinians to live as our neighbours.

Israel and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) agreed Tuesday to intensify talks on building a Palestinian airport in a bid to win approval for the pioneer project from Israeli security officials, negotiators said.

Peres 'will seek complete peace'

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres has said he would resume talks with Syria as part of a push for a comprehensive Middle East peace if he was reelected in national polls on May 29.

"The first thing I will do is renew the peace process with the Syrians," Mr. Peres told Israel's Channel One Television on Monday.

"I want to arrive at a comprehensive peace in the Middle East in the next four years," he added.

Mr. Peres and right-wing challenger Benjamin Netanyahu used key television interviews to try to sell their visions of how peace and security could be achieved.

Israeli law prohibits broadcasting images of candidates three weeks before national elections.

Mr. Peres, leading Mr. Netanyahu by about five points in opinion polls, said his platform also included keeping the Jordan River as a "security" border and maintaining Jerusalem as a "united capital" of Israel.

He seized on what he saw as discrepancies in the message of Mr. Netanyahu's Likud Party, which has opposed the peace deal that

Mr. Peres' Labour Party struck with the Palestinians.

While Mr. Netanyahu said he would accept the Oslo agreement, Israel Television quoted a prominent Likud member, ex-General Ariel Sharon, as saying he could not recognise it.

Mr. Peres, with a picture of him and his slain predecessor Mr. Yitzhak Rabin visible in the background, said any plans to go back on the self-rule agreement signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in 1993 would be the "end of the peace process."

Asked why he was delaying Israel's troop withdrawal from the West Bank town of Hebron, Mr. Peres said it was important to work in stages for security reasons.

"Our problem is not the timing of the promised redeployment, but the Iranians, the fundamentalists and the Hamas who want to destroy the peace process," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu said in his television interview that he would allow the Palestinians to control matters in self-rule areas but not security.

"That's the difference. If this (Labour) government

(Continued on page 7)

Israel, U.N. lock horns over Cana

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Shimon Peres blamed the United Nations Tuesday for the Cana massacre in South Lebanon, accusing it of failing to inform Israel that refugees were sheltering at the U.N. camp.

But U.N. officials in Lebanon angrily denied his version of the events which led up to the deaths of 102 people in Israeli shelling of the U.N. compound on April 18.

Asked whether Israeli intelligence knew civilians were in the camp, Mr. Peres said: "Definitely not. We didn't have the slightest idea and I think it is a scandal they were permitted into the camp and without letting us know about it."

Israel has said it was firing back in response to a rocket and mortar attack launched by Hizbollah guerrillas from near the Cana camp, and that out-of-date maps were to blame for the shells hitting the base.

"I think the Hizbollah people themselves, after the shooting and before the shooting, used the UNIFIL camp as a hideaway for them and their families," Mr. Peres added in a satellite-link press conference on the Cable News Network.

But U.N. spokesman in

Lebanon Timur Goksel insisted Israel knew the camp was packed with civilians when it attacked. "From the first day of the Israeli attacks we announced to everyone that there were around 6,000 Lebanese sheltering in U.N. bases," he said. "This is not a scandal to grant shelter in a U.N. position," Mr. Goksel said.

An initial U.N. report into the massacre has concluded that Israeli artillery gunners deliberately targeted the Cana camp and U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali said the final report would be published.

Lebanon officials said meanwhile Lebanon and Syria had come up with a joint draft to counter a U.S. blueprint for establishing a five-nation group to monitor the Israel-Hizbollah ceasefire.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the agreement resulted from talks held in the Syrian capital of Damascus Monday between Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and Foreign Minister Faris Bouez and Syrian government leaders.

The counter-draft, details of which remained secret,

(Continued on page 7)

U.S. sees a 'new Mideast' in the making in wake of recent violence, ceasefire

WASHINGTON (USIA) — The permanent status Middle East peace negotiations that began Sunday, May 4, will "deal with a variety of different issues. It is not... the (role of) the United States to take up positions on those issues. The parties themselves, through the process of negotiation, will resolve them," a State Department official predicted May 3.

In a May 3 international Arabic language television programme, "Dialogue With the West," jointly produced by USIA's Worldnet and the London-based Middle East Broadcasting Centre, Dennis Ross, special Middle East coordinator for the State Department, stressed that America's role in the process is to help create a comprehensive peace. "Our focus, he said, is on creating the kind of peace that can be stable and enduring."

"First things first," Mr. Ross said. "Let's try to resolve the nature of the conflict."

Mr. Ross also called for "a region that no longer lives behind economic."

"So many parts of the world have been able to progress. The conflict in the Middle East has held the countries in the region back," he declared. "It is time to move forward to give people a chance to live a normal life time to give them a chance to fulfill their aspirations and to do so in an environment of peace and to create prosperity to go with it."

Following are excerpts from an unofficial transcript, with focus on comments and responses by Mr. Ross:

"It seems to me that what happened last week embodied, I believe, a very important set of accomplishments. I think it's important to understand what we saw last week was in a sense a combination of the new Middle East and the old Middle East still co-mingling."

"We clearly saw the ability to work together to try to resolve crises and we also saw in the action of the PNC (Palestinian National Council) in revising those parts of the covenant that were inconsistent with the letter of mutual recognition, we saw a fulfillment of a commitment even in circumstances that were difficult."

"I think from the standpoint of seeing the Palestinians take a dramatic step that was a fulfillment of a commitment, from the standpoint of the United States leading an effort and producing a ceasefire that brought an end to the killing, brought an end to a people being displaced from their homes, it was very important for us to be able to complete that task and also to show that there was a connection to the resumption of negotiations."

"What I mean by suggesting that there's a co-mingling of the old and the new is that obviously, on the one hand, those committed to peace made it very clear they were committed to peace and a different future, and we are obviously still dealing with those who have a very different kind of view."

"Our... posture is that the permanent status negotiations will... deal with a variety of different issues. What's most important is not that the U.S. take up positions on those issues. What's most important is that the parties themselves, through the process of negotiation, will resolve it. They're going to resolve it. We're not going to resolve it."

"...Our focus is on trying to create a comprehensive peace. Our focus is on creating a kind of peace that can be stable and enduring. There's a very clear reality here that first things first. Let's try to resolve the nature of the conflict. Let's put an end to the conflict. Let's

establish a very different kind of Middle East where peace and prosperity can be the hallmark of the future. And obviously, as one deals with creating a new Middle East one wants to remove the remnants of the past and the remnants of conflict. Over time one can also deal with some of the manifestations of conflict including weaponry."

"There is, in fact, a multi-lateral negotiating process. One of the working groups in that multi-lateral negotiating process is (dealing with) regional security and arms control. And what we want to see that those kinds of issues that are not just bilateral but multi-lateral in character, including arms control, should be dealt with. We should make headway where we can. Most importantly, let's achieve peace first and then let's transform the region as we've known it so that it becomes a very different kind of region where peace and prosperity can prevail."

"...Well, what I would say is that we have worked very hard to try to transform the Middle East as we know it from one that is characterised by violence and struggle and confrontation and pain and suffering into a new region that is characterised by people being able to live a normal life. We have obviously contributed, I think, very heavily, to the Israeli-Palestinian agreement. We have contributed very heavily to the achievement of the peace between Israel and Jordan. We are actively involved in trying to help the parties negotiate an agreement between Israel and Syria and (between) Israel and Lebanon."

"What we did last week in terms of bringing the crisis in southern Lebanon and northern Israel to an end, reflected the kind of commitment that we have and the effort we're prepared to make."



TIME OFF: A Palestinian family rides on a fishing boat on Gaza beach. Palestinian families are starting to return to the sea looking for amusement as the summer season approaches to find some respite from the hardships imposed by the 10-week-old Israeli siege of the Mediterranean strip (Reuters photo)

Israelis delight in puppets poking fun at politicians

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Rubber puppets are drawing record television audiences here with their satirical, no-holds barred look at the Israeli political scene with less than a month to go before general elections.

More than 30 per cent of Israelis are glued to their screens every Friday to watch the Israeli version of the former British TV show "Spitting Image."

"At the height of the electoral campaign, these rubber puppets who have no shame have succeeded in irritating all politicians, even those who refuse to admit it," said Noemie Levitsky, a journalist with the daily Yediot Aharanot, who admits she is an addict of the show.

The only order given by Uzi Peled, boss of the private Channel 2, to the makers of "Hartsoufim" (or "What a Cheek"), was "make it over the top."

The producers have gleefully complied, mercilessly poking fun at one and all. But they have regularly come under strong pressure to tone it down from politicians worried about being the next target.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat is a regular

"guest" and one sketch showed him with a huge bulbous nose and spittle dripping from his lower lip, on the phone to Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

He proposes a redeployment "in stages" by the Israeli army from the country's largest city Tel Aviv, in exchange for an end to suicide attacks before the May 29 elections.

"It is an interesting idea, let me talk to Bill Clinton about it," Mr. Peres replied after a moment's thought.

In another skit, Mr. Peres is seen in a trance, his eyes covered by a virtual reality mask as he describes his vision of a "New Middle East."

Neither is right-wing opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu spared. He is portrayed as an aging playboy, who howls at the moon every time a woman walks past and draws parallels between "safe sex" and "safe peace."

President Ezer Weizman is said to have flown into a rage on seeing himself portrayed on the screen with a pilot's leather flying cap on his head, a reference to his military past, speaking incoherently and trembling from alcoholic shakes.

Iran says it is ready to confront any U.S. aggression

DUBAI (R) — Iran's Defence Minister Mohammad Forouzandeh said in remarks published on Tuesday that Iran was ready to confront any U.S. aggression against it in the Gulf, and denied Iran was developing tunnels to store missiles.

"Iran will make the appropriate response to any American aggression," he said in response to a question by Al Hayat newspaper about whether he expected any U.S. military operation against Iran.

Mr. Forouzandeh was speaking to the newspaper in Qatar on a visit to strengthen ties with Doha.

Tehran opposes the U.S. military presence in the Gulf and says Washington falsely accuses it of expansionism in the region to scare its Gulf Arab allies into buying more U.S. weapons.

On Thursday U.S. officials confirmed a report in June's Defence Weekly quoting army general Binford Peay, chief of the U.S. Central Command, as saying the United States was concerned that Iran was apparently building tunnels on its coast that could be used to launch or store long-range missiles. Iran denied the charge.

"American aggression against Iran is loud and clear — and the announcement of those lies is part of the propaganda campaign," Mr. Forouzandeh said. "This is American propaganda against Iran. Iran has officially denied and rebutted this."

The newspaper reported the minister said Iran had no intention of developing long-range missiles.

"Iran is seeking stability in the (Gulf) region... but the propaganda war is coming from the side of America, which aims to sell weapons to the Gulf and justify its presence there," Mr. Forouzandeh said.

The sparsely populated but oil-rich Gulf Arab states rely mainly on Western allies for defence and most exercise regularly with U.S. and other forces including those of Britain and France.

'Palestine's poet' addresses cheering W. Bank audience

BIR ZEIT (R) — Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish addressed thousands of his compatriots on Monday during his first visit to Palestine after 27 years in exile.

Mr. Darwish, 54, is adored by Palestinians and Arabs generally for his nationalistic poetry in rich, classical Arabic. For many, he is an embodiment of Palestine and is known regionally and internationally as "Palestine's poet."

"I feel that my words are not strong enough to express my feelings," Mr. Darwish told his audience.

"I feel like the bird that found its skies and the fish that found its waters," he said.

Around 3,000 Palestinians stood and clapped when he arrived at the West Bank's Bir Zeit University. He recited three poems about Palestinians and Palestine under the night sky.

Mr. Darwish was born in the Galilee area, which became part of Israel after the founding of the Jewish state in 1948. After Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, he was placed under house arrest until 1970. He finally left the country, giving up Israeli nationality to work with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

He lived in Lebanon and France, and has recently moved to Jordan.

Mr. Darwish was prevented by Israel from returning home for many years. Seven months ago, he was allowed into Gaza for two weeks.

Many of Mr. Darwish's poems express the painful life of Palestinians in exile, and the memories of Palestinians in hometowns they fled in the 1948 and 1967 Arab-Israeli wars.

Last week, Mr. Darwish was given permission to visit Israel to attend the funeral of the famous Palestinian writer, Emile Habibi, in Haifa. This was Mr. Darwish's first visit to his hometown since 1970 and his first ever to the West Bank.

"On this earth, we find there is something that deserves life... it was called Palestine, it is now called Palestine," he told his audience.

Mr. Darwish, who resigned from his post as PLO Executive Committee member to protest against the signing of the self-rule peace deal, has also used his poetry to criticise Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's accords with Israel.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Remains of Turkish hero to be returned

ANKARA (AFP) — The remains of the General Enver Pasha, a Turkish national hero killed fighting Soviet forces in Tajikistan in 1922, are to be returned to Turkey, President Suleyman Demirel announced Monday. "We have agreed with the government of Tajikistan for the transfer of the remains of Enver Pasha, who is an important historical figure for us," Mr. Demirel told reporters after a meeting with visiting Tajik President Ismaili Rakhmanov. Pasha was a leading member of the Committee for Union and Progress, inspired by the Young Turks movement, and personally acted to involve the Ottoman empire in World War I on Germany's side. Minister of war during the conflict he fled to Central Asia after the Turks lost the war, launching a campaign to create a "Greater Turkistan" there. Pasha, considered by nationalists as one of the greatest heroes in Turkish history, was killed in Baljuvan in Tajikistan in August 1922 while fighting Soviet forces which had invaded the region. Tajik officials said last week that they had recently discovered the exact location of Pasha's tomb.

Peres says he has no plans for retirement

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, seeking reelection in national polls on May 29, said on Monday he may run for office again in the year 2000. Mr. Peres, 72, campaigning to uphold Middle East peace deals, said he had no plans for retirement. "I promise you that I won't forget to die. Don't worry," he joked in an interview with Israel's Channel One television.

Wife of Jean-Marie Le Pen to visit Iraq

BAGHDAD (AFP) — The wife of the French right-wing leader Jean-Marie Le Pen said Monday she would travel to Iraq next week to assess its humanitarian needs in the face of U.N. sanctions. Jany Le Pen, who heads an organisation called SOS Iraqi Children, told the Iraqi News Agency (INA) she would also meet with Iraqi officials during her week-long stay from May 14. She told INA she could not bear to see "the suffering of the Iraqi people, especially children, women and the elderly, because of the unfair embargo imposed on them nearly six years ago." The French daily Le Monde reported Friday that Jany Le Pen would give the Iraqi government two ambulances and medicines bought by her organisation. It also said her husband, the head of the National Front, may meet Iraqi President Saddam Hussein as part of an operation on behalf of SOS Iraqi Children. The front said nothing had been decided yet.

Member of Egyptian parliament dies in house

CAIRO (R) — A member of the Egyptian parliament, Khaled Eyada, collapsed and died of a heart attack in the house on Monday evening after making a speech on health insurance. Health Minister Ismail Salama, who is also a doctor, tried but failed to resuscitate Eyada, an ophthalmologist aged about 70. The government newspaper Al-Ahram said it was the first time a member had died during a session of parliament. Eyada represented the ruling National Democratic Party in a constituency in the Suez Canal province of Ismailia.

In Rabin's shadow, Peres campaigns among youth

RAMAT GAN, Israel (AP) — Prime Minister Shimon Peres has hit the campaign trail with the shadow of his slain predecessor by his side.

On Monday, he met with students who spoke with Yitzhak Rabin just before the Nov. 4 assassination. Mr. Peres told them that the trauma of the slaying has led to a political awakening among Israeli youth.

"Yitzhak's death has revealed your generation," Mr. Peres said.

He explained to the students that he and Mr. Rabin set out to make peace with the Arabs after winning the 1992 election "to allow your generation to enter the next century without the obstacles of war."

The line went down well at the Obel Shem high school in this sedate, upper middle-class suburb of Tel Aviv, and the 300 students gave Israel's peace architect a standing ovation.

"May your dreams come true," gushed senior Eyal Buchman, as the Labour

Party leader beamed.

Labour officials, including Mr. Peres, believe that Mr. Rabin's murder may sway younger voters, who in the past tended to support right-wing parties, to change their loyalties. Youths were predominant at memorial vigils and Labour rallies after the killing.

But elsewhere in Israel, youths may be more sceptical. And opposition leaders say Mr. Peres is exploiting the assassination for reelection in the May 29 balloting.

As one example, the point to a recent rally in Tel Aviv marking the assassination's six-month anniversary. Some 50,000 Peres supporters, many of them young people, crowded the plaza where Mr. Rabin was gunned down by a nationalist Jew opposed to peace policies.

As fearful demonstrators waved signs declaring "Peres, you are not alone," a taped recording of Mr. Rabin's last speech, an unusually dramatic appeal for support for the peace pro-

cess, reverberated through the square.

The Likud Party had unsuccessfully appealed to the supreme court to prevent the event, arguing that while nominally apolitical it constituted unfair exploitation of the assassination for political gain.

"I suggest the Labour Party preserve for all of us the memory and the legacy of Yitzhak Rabin," said Likud's Yitzhak Mordechai, who like Mr. Rabin is a former army general. "Using it in the wrong way will harm both the Labour Party and, to my great sorrow, also the memory of Yitzhak Rabin."

Mr. Peres responded angrily Tuesday when asked by Israeli army radio about Likud's allegations.

"What do you mean, 'using Rabin'?" Mr. Peres said. "The man was murdered because of organised incitement. He was killed because of his views. We must not distort it, and we must not forget it."

Labour Party leaders and Mr. Rabin's widow, Leah,

have accused Mr. Peres' challenger, Benjamin Netanyahu of Likud, of helping create the divisive climate that permitted Mr. Rabin's assassination.

Mrs. Rabin has said Mr. Netanyahu did not do enough to stop chants of "Rabin is a traitor" and "Rabin is a murderer" during opposition rallies. Mr. Netanyahu has countered that he did what he could to discourage violence among his followers.

Mr. Rabin's assassin, Yigal Amir, has said he killed the prime minister in order to stop the handover of land as part of Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking.

Postler Mina Tsemach said recently that while Mr. Peres enjoyed strong support among youth for several months, much of it was eroded by militant attacks in February and March. She said Mr. Peres is now running alone even with Mr. Netanyahu among teenagers and people in their early 20s.

Columnist Gideon Samet suggested in the Haaretz

daily Monday that Mr. Peres was expecting too much from the youth. He argued that like their contemporaries elsewhere, young Israelis are less idealistic and more cynical than their parents and "don't really know what they want."

That has not stopped Mr. Peres from targeting young Israelis. In a new election video, Mr. Peres is seen surrounded by singing teenagers urging him to take care of himself and not abandon "the dream of peace."

Mr. Netanyahu initially opposed the accords Mr. Rabin and Mr. Peres signed with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), but now says he accepts the Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza. Still, he says, a Likud government will not allow the Palestinians an independent state or return the Golan Heights for peace with Syria.

A Likud campaign video also promises peace — but more security as well.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

readings: Amman 39 per cent, Aqaba 21 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Abbas Al Hakim 85446
Dr. Jamal Jarrar 84733
Dr. Arafat Al Ashhab 602507
Dr. Mohammad Al Abbadi 77899
First pharmacy 661912
Forensic pharmacy 770336
Al Aqsa pharmacy 637055
Najm pharmacy 62672
Al Salem pharmacy 636720
Yacoub pharmacy 64945
Shaykh pharmacy 637660
Najm pharmacy 62672
Najm pharmacy 847632

RAJID:

Dr. Hassan Abu Bakr 27682
Al Quds pharmacy (-)

ZARQA:

Dr. Fadi Jabir 98459
Khalid pharmacy 98417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 642816
Al-Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 642816
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Mahar, J. Amman 636140
Palatine, Shuchani 607071
Shuchani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musallat Hospital 667279

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
06:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
06:30 Aqaba (add) (RJ)
06:30 Jeddah (RJ)
06:30 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
06:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

18:30 Cairo (MS)
18:30 Jeddah (SV)
18:30 London (add) (P)
18:30 Tunis (TU)
18:30 Vienna (OS)
18:30 Athens (AE)
18:30 Beirut (ME)
18:30 London (KU)
18:30 Cairo (MS)
18:30 Abu Dhabi, Karachi (SV)
18:30 New Delhi (RJ)
18:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
18:30 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
18:30 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
18:30 Sanaz (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
06:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
06:30 Aqaba (add) (RJ)
06:30 Jeddah (RJ)
06:30 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
06:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
06:30 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
06:30 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
06:30 Sanaz (RJ)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights (Marka Airport)

AMMAN (Marka Airport) (RW)

06:30 Amman (OIA) (RW)
06:30 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
06:30 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
06:30 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
06:30 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
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06:30 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
06:30 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman : 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus : 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus : 7:30 p.m. every Monday
Arr. Amman : 5:30 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 700/500
Banana 600/600
Banana (Mukammir) 520/520
Banana (imported) 860/600
Cabbage 100/60
Carrot 280/180
Cauliflower 280/180
Cucumbers (large) 120/70
Cucumbers (small) 180/100
Fava beans 150/100
Garlic 210/130
Garlic (green) 550/350
Lemon 580/380
Marrow (large) 180/120
Marrow (small) 270/180
Mushrooms 270/180
Onion (dry) 170/100
Orange 400/300
Peanut 260/150
Pepper (hot) 280/180
Pepper (sweet) 260/160
Potato 160/100
String Beans 440/280
Tomato 240/120

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:00 The Flashbacks
15:30 Dinosaurs
16:00 Bill Nye the Science Guy
16:30 The Secret World of Alex Mac
17:00 News Flash
17:30 L'Intit
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22:30 L'Intit
23:00 L'Intit
23:30 L'Intit

PRAYER TIMES

06:13 Fajr
06:30 Sunrise
12:32 Dhuhr
16:12 Asr
19:25 Maghrib
20:52 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish, Tel. 610740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637480

Dr. In Sale Church Tel. 661757
Terrace Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625441
Anglican Church Tel. 622626
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625265
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
Grace-opening Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 659932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811285
English-speaking
Latin Catholic Parish Tel. 614130

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Warm, dry, and dusty weather conditions will prevail with winds southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate, and some rain.

Min./Max. temp. 18/34
Aqaba 21/30
Dusts 16/36
Jordan Valley 20/37

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 33 Aqaba 36 Humidity

Qatari minister ends visit; describes talks as positive

AMMAN (Petra)— Qatari Minister of Justice Najib Nueimi Tuesday concluded a three-day visit to Jordan describing his talks with HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and Jordanian officials as positive and constructive and reflecting the excellent ties between Jordan and Qatar.

Dr. Nueimi said that the talks here focused mainly on the preparation of a draft agreement on bilateral cooperation in judicial legislation, training of Qatari judges and promoting the judicial system in Qatar.

The draft agreement will be signed during a visit to Qatar shortly by Minister of Justice Abdul Karim Dughmi and an accompanying delegation, said the Qatari official.

Referring to his meeting with Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Dr. Nueimi said he discussed with the premier the Jerusalem question and areas for promoting cooperation between Jordan and Qatar in various fields, adding that his meetings with Mr. Dughmi were also very



Qatari Minister of Justice Najib Nueimi Tuesday meets with his Jordanian counterpart Abdul Karim Dughmi prior to his departure from Amman at the conclusion of his three-day visit (Petra photo)

successful.

Dr. Nueimi, who visited the Jordanian Judicial Institute and was briefed on its services and programmes, said the judicial system in Jordan was more advanced

than those of many Arab countries. He said he hoped that the two countries will launch bilateral cooperation in judicial affairs soon.

Mr. Dughmi, who saw off the Qatari Minister and his

delegation, said that in their talks the two sides prepared a draft agreement on cooperation in judicial matters, but said further study was required before it becomes final.

Experts highlight value of pasture lands

AMMAN (Petra) — A representative of an international agricultural organisation Tuesday warned of the dangers resulting from continued deterioration of pasture lands and their improper care.

Nasri Haddad, regional programme coordinator for West Asia of the International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA), told a workshop held at the Queen Zein Al Sharaf Complex, that although desert and badia regions in Jordan account for 93.8 per cent of the country's total area they produce only 25 per cent of the animal feed

needed the country. Development of natural pasture lands is one of the most important issues and challenges facing Jordan and the other countries of the region because they provide the most important source of feed for animals, said Dr. Haddad adding that pasture lands are needed in Jordan also to control desertification.

The three-day workshop, organised by ICARDA, the German Agency for Technical Cooperation and the Ministry of Agriculture, was opened by Ministry Secretary General Ghaleb Abu Orabi who underlined the importance of pasture land for semi-desert coun-

tries like Jordan as they represent a natural wealth. Noting that Jordan is one of the poorest nations in terms of water resources, Mr. Abu Orabi said more than 90 per cent of the lands in the Kingdom receive around 200 millimetres of rainfall annually.

He said that the Ministry of Agriculture was together with other concerned authorities involved in programmes for effective utilisation of rain, surface and underground water resources, conducting water harvesting, preserving soil, planting trees and shrubs and organising grazing.

In cooperation with world

organisations, the government is also involved in programmes to combat desertification by creating and expanding pasture lands, he said.

Participants from 25 different ministries government departments and regional organisations attending the workshop on the development of pasture lands are reviewing work in progress on pasture projects, promoting public awareness about pasture lands, and submitting proposals for joint action and cooperation among the concerned parties in the development and care of pasture lands.

Minister of Education stresses need to upgrade nursing in Jordan

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

IRBID — Minister of education Munther Masri said Tuesday there was an urgent need to review and reconsider the nursing curriculum in Jordan.

Dr. Masri, deputising for her Majesty Queen Noor, told 600 nurses, researchers and educators of 20 foreign countries at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) that efforts should be geared towards reforming the nursing curriculum and to improve the levels of education.

Rowaida Ma'aitah, dean of the Nursing Faculty at JUST, pointed to several factors standing as obstacles in the way for nursing education and students enrolling in nursing courses.

"The image problem remains a big factor in our country in addition to the different levels of nursing practices," Ms. Ma'aitah said during the Fourth

International Middle-East Nursing Conference entitled "Nursing Excellence in the 90s: An International Perspective."

According to Dr. Ma'aitah, some 4,500 nurses are registered at the Nursing Council in Jordan. She added that a recent study indicated that in Jordan only seven to eight for every 10,000 people, which, she said, is a low number.

The rapid population growth in Jordan is quick, she said, and the latest migrations to the country have created the shortage of nurses.

Sheila Cameron of the University of Windsor in Canada said the changes in nursing throughout the world warranted close cooperation in various institutions concerned with the profession.

"There are many difference and similarities within the profession, travel became easier and we can communicate easier which

gives us an opportunity to work in different countries which will move the profession of nursing further," Dr. Cameron said.

She told the Jordan Times that the University of Windsor and JUST were working together on a project funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) which focuses on the evaluation of the baccalaureate nursing programme and to develop a masters programme and staff development in Jordan for the staff nurses.

The event at JUST aimed at gathering nurses from all over the world to discuss nursing problems in the world and to exchange their views about the profession.

The conference, which will review 119 working papers and 160 abstracts, presented by nurses, educators and researchers, will also focus on primary health care, issues related to patients with acute and chronic illness such as

cancer and diabetes, and the care of women and children.

The goal of the event is to provide a forum for nurses from different cultures to exchange views about their perspectives.

The conference will explore how nursing practice, education and research are changing and evolving throughout the global community.

The conference is cosponsored by CIDA, the University of Windsor and Villanova University in the U.S.

Nurses attending the conference represent Lebanon, Canada, the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, Iran, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Oman, Tanzania, Bulgaria, Sudan, Turkey, Finland, Kenya, Palestine and Jordan.

'UNRWA budget deficit could mean service cutbacks'

AMMAN (J.T.) — The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) is considering reducing its health, educational and social services to Palestinian refugees in its five fields of operations if its annual budget continues to face a deficit, a senior UNRWA official announced Tuesday.

Speaking at a press briefing at the Philadelphia Hotel, UNRWA's Chief Public Information Officer at the agency's headquarters in Vienna Sandro Tucci said the deficit, which last year amounted to \$8 million, will, if continued, affect these services to the Palestinian refugees hosted in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

UNRWA currently provides services to 3.2 million Palestinian refugees through the help of 22,000 staff members in these areas.

Mr. Tucci made the announcement of a possible cut-back on the eve of the annual non-official meeting in Amman Wednesday by the representatives of major donor nations and the countries where UNRWA is carrying its services to the refugees.

He said that the agency has been striving to offer the refugees educational, health and social services on the same level as those offered by the countries hosting the refugees for their own citizens, but the recurrent deficit in its budget makes it difficult to carry on this task.

Referring to the meeting Wednesday, Mr. Tucci said it coincides with very critical situation facing the region as a whole and at a time when UNRWA is feeling that it is too burdened to honour its obligations towards the refugees.

Mr. Tucci said that last year



A woman receives dental treatment at one of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) clinics (UNRWA photo)

the agency presented a working paper to the donor countries meeting outlining its programmes in the five areas in the coming five years and discussed these programmes with the representatives of the donor nations urging them to honour their commitments to the refugees.

This year, he added, UNRWA plans to submit another working paper outlining the kind of services required for the Palestinians

refugees.

Noting that the agency's 1995 budget amounted to \$320 million, Mr. Tucci said that its current financial situation and this year's budget remain unclear since the donor nations do not declare their contributions together but rather at different intervals during the year.

Last February UNRWA announced that it was moving its headquarters from Vienna to Gaza and Amman on June

15 this year and that the headquarters, the financial, legal and public relations departments will be based in Gaza, while the social services, education and health departments will operate out of Amman.

The agency's mandate ends in 1999, and according to UNRWA Commissioner General Peter Hansen, who visited Jordan in March, it is hoped that within a few years the Palestine National Authority would be able to take over the organisation's activities.

Multilateral economic development meeting to convene

Jordanian economy to come under review in regional context

By Ghaila Ahul
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The impact of regional developments on the major sectors of the Jordanian economy and the role of the public sector in economic operations in light of the new regional circumstances will be the focus of a conference entitled "The Jordanian Economy Within its Regional Framework: A Future Outlook," on May 26-29.

The conference, which is organised by Al-Urdun Al-Jadid Research Centre in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and Philadelphia University, will also tackle the likelihood of the formation of a "New Middle-Eastern Market," according to the centre's president Hani Hourani.

"The conference will follow up on the Middle East and North Africa Economic Summit (MENA). It will also identify the degree of adaptability of the Jordanian economy to regional and international economic developments," Mr. Hourani told the Jordan Times.

He added that the conference will discuss the impact of the regional economic developments on different sectors in the region through working papers on water and agriculture, banks and trade, tourism, industry and transportation.

He said the meeting, which will be sponsored by the European Union (EU), is to be attended by high level officials and experts who will also discuss two reports about the Copenhagen social development meeting and the coming Cairo economic conference due to be held in November.

Sectoral sub-committees, he added, will hold side meetings prior to the conference to revise plans for the economic and tourism development of the Aqaba-Eilat-Taba region.

each sector to encourage more competition," said Mr. Hourani.

According to a statement by the centre, "the conference is expected to highlight the seriousness of the challenges which the Jordanian economy is facing under the present circumstances, while also exploring the possibilities and potential growth within its regional framework."

It "will provide an opportunity for scholars and researchers in Jordan and abroad and to economic policy makers and representatives of the private sector to engage in a dialogue relevant to the recent changes, not only as imposed changes but also as opportunities to review economic policies and structures, which will enable Jordan to play the role of a major partner in the formulation of the features of the region's future," the statement added.

It said participants will also be able to present specific ideas and options for economic cooperation with Jordan and other countries in the Middle East.

Academicians from Jordanian, Arab and other universities in the world, researchers, economists, experts, representatives of government institutions and several international and regional organisations will participate in the four-day conference, said Mr.

Hourani. He added that participants from other Arab countries, Europe and North America will be invited to join the roundtable on the future of the region's economy.

"We expect a vast participation of the European Union (EU) and Germany," Mr. Hourani said.

Among the Jordanian participants, Mr. Hourani said, will be experts and officials including economist, Senator and former Minister of Information Jawad Anani, water expert Munther Haddadin, Royal Jordanian Vice President of Marketing and Sales Majdi Sabri, Wasef Azar, former Minister of Planning and former General Manager of the Industrial Development Bank Taher Kana'an, Tayseer Abdul Jabbar, Vice President for Administrative Affairs at the University of Jordan Suleiman Arabiyat, Yarmouk University Professor Khalil Hammad, economist and columnist Fahed Faneek and Director of Noor Al Hussein Foundation Ibrahim Badran.

He said Arab professors from Cairo, Bethlehem and Birzeit universities will also be present at the conference.

The final session of the conference Mr. Hourani said will be centred around suggestions and remarks made by participants. Those suggestions, he added will be studied at later workshops.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

*Abstract art by Iraqi artist Akram Al-Shukli at the phoenix gallery, Garden Street, until May 15.

*Recent works by Ayman Al-Naser at Darat Al-Funun, Jabel Wehbeh, until June 1. Also displaying paintings and sculptures of contemporary Arab artists.


*Works by Syrian artist Ibrahim Al-Ansari at Abdul Hammed Shouman Foundation, Jabel Amman, until May 16.

*Works by Palestinian artist Nasser Souaid entitled "Homage to Jaffa" at Darat Al-Funun, Jabel Wehbeh, until May 9.

*Gandhi's original photographs from May 5-9 at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FIEM

*Cuban film "Guardafuentes" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabel Amman, at 6:30.



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Under The Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, Jordan River Designs presents:
"NEW BEGINNINGS" Introducing our baby line along with our new Spring collection. At JRD showroom, Jabel Amman, 1st Circle, 9-23 May, 1996, from 9:00 am - 9:00 pm. Tel. 613081-2

Russia expels 9 British diplomats in spy row

MOSCOW (R) — Russia accused nine British diplomats of running a spy ring Tuesday and ordered them to leave the country, the Federal Security Service said.

The announcement, although not immediately confirmed by Russia's Foreign Ministry, put London and Moscow on a diplomatic collision course.

In the worst East-West espionage row since the cold war, Britain warned Russia that it planned a "significant" response. It said the Russian allegations were completely unjustified and British officials hinted at "tit-for-tat" expulsions.

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) said a note had been handed to Sir Andrew Wood, the British ambassador in Moscow, declaring each of the nine diplomats "persona non grata" — a term meaning they are unacceptable in the country.

The FSB, Russia's counter-intelligence force, said the diplomats had all been linked with a Russian official arrested in Moscow last month as he allegedly made contact with agents of Britain's M16 Secret Intelligence Service (SIS).

"The ambassador of Great Britain was presented with a list of nine British intelligence officers who worked under the cover of diplomats and have been declared persona non grata," FSB spokesman Alexander

Zdanovich told ITAR-TASS news agency. "Expelled are those who, in one way or another, are linked to the case of the agent whom we have arrested and who had been passing on political, defence and strategic information."

He said the note provided details of what each of the diplomats were alleged to have done and gave documentary evidence of their contacts with the Russian.

In another development, TASS said the FSB had arrested a scientist in the Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk for manufacturing and smuggling abroad nuclear material which could be used for military purposes. No link was made with the expulsions.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Grigory Karasin did not immediately confirm the expulsions.

He urged London to avoid "excessive emotions and hasty decisions" which could damage Anglo-Russian relations, which had appeared smooth before the row broke Monday.

In London, British ministers and officials accused Russia of over-reacting. "We have not heard anything formal yet from the Russian authorities and cannot comment at this stage as we don't know what they will actually do. They haven't made their position clear yet," a Foreign Office spokesman said. Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind

said: "If action is taken by the Russians then that will inevitably create the need for a significant response."

The cold war-style row broke less than six weeks before Russia's presidential election in which President Boris Yeltsin faces a challenge from Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov.

Some diplomats suggest the unusual fanfare accompanying the row may be linked to the election, with Mr. Yeltsin anxious to be seen taking an anti-Western line to win votes from Communists and nationalists.

The FSB is headed by Mikhail Barsukov, a Yeltsin ally.

"The problem here, quite clearly from a political point of view, is that this is happening right in the middle of an election, and you have President Yeltsin standing for re-election against charges from the Communists that he has sold out or is too friendly with the West," former British Defence Secretary Tom King told BBC Radio.

The last British diplomats to be publicly forced out left Moscow in 1989 when eight, plus three journalists, were expelled after London threw out 11 alleged Soviet spies.

The best known incidents of Anglo-Russian spy rivalry were in the 1950s and 1960s, when a Cambridge-educated ring led by Kim Philby embar-

Judge dismisses some Whitewater charges

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (R) — A federal judge dismissed some charges in the Whitewater trial against President Bill Clinton's former business partners Monday but the case against the two key defendants was left intact.

Judge George Howard Jr. threw out the four most serious charges of conspiracy against Susan McDougal, a partner of Mr. Clinton in the failed Whitewater real estate venture.

But the judge refused to dismiss charges against her ex-husband James McDougal, the owner of the Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan, which defaulted in 1989 at a cost to taxpayers of around \$60 million.

Judge Howard said he was "persuaded that the remaining charges should be heard by the jury."

Judge Howard's ruling means the defence must now present its case starting Tuesday and that videotaped testimony from Mr. Clinton will likely be played in court later this week.

Most of the government's case against Arkansas Gov. Jim Guy Tucker, who succeeded Mr. Clinton in the post, was also kept in place.

Mr. Tucker was declared innocent of four minor charges but still faces the more serious allegations of conspiracy to fraud.

Defence attorneys for Mr. Tucker and the McDougals had urged that the entire case be dismissed, claiming

that prosecutors failed during nine weeks of testimony to back up their charges of fraud and conspiracy.

Both sides took some encouragement from the ruling, but neither could claim a total victory.

"I am delighted to see a big part of the government's case is out. Some of it remains and of course we will have to address that," said George Collins, a lawyer for Mr. Tucker.

Chief prosecutor Ray Jahn said he was "not disappointed" by Judge Howard's decision. "The indictment basically remains the same," he said.

Neither the president nor first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton are accused of wrongdoing in the case but the president was subpoenaed as a defence witness for James and Susan McDougal.

The Clintons joined the McDougals in the Whitewater real estate venture in 1978. Their investment lost money, but prosecutors are investigating whether funds were illegally funnelled from McDougal's savings and loan into Whitewater or even into Mr. Clinton's campaigns for state governor.

We don't want guns, Australians tell polls

CANBERRA (R) — An overwhelming majority of Australians support banning automatic and semi-automatic guns in the wake of the Port Arthur massacre, according to two separate newspaper polls published Tuesday.

In findings which cast doubt over the gun lobby's political clout, The Age newspaper poll found 90 per cent of those surveyed supported the ban and 95 per cent backed a national gun register.

A similar poll in The Australian found 83 per cent support for a ban and 92 per cent for a national register.

"Few issues tested in opinion polls have won such strong support," The Australian said in an accompanying article.

Proposals for a ban and a national gun register are key points of a plan for tougher gun laws being pushed by the national government at a meeting with state and territory police ministers here Friday.

"The poll indicates the environment is right for a ban," The Age said.

Australia's gun groups, which have in the past run political campaigns against moves to tighten gun laws, say that tougher national gun laws would not prevent shooting massacres.

Some gun groups are threatening to campaign against politicians who support measures for national controls.

The Australian survey found 60 per cent of those questioned believed tougher gun laws would prevent mass shootings such as last week's Port Arthur massacre, in which 35 people died, while only 35 per cent thought tighter controls would not prevent future tragedies.

The Age poll also found about two in three people believed gun owners should store their arms with police.

Support for such a move was 68 per cent among respondents living in the city and 58 per cent among those in country areas.



A traditionally-dressed Indian woman casts her vote at a polling booth in Bombay Tuesday. More than 200 million people were eligible to vote in 183 constituencies spread over 12 states in the third phase of the elections, which are expected to produce a hung parliament. Some 600,000 security personnel were deployed across the country to prevent disruption of the vote (Reuters photo)

5 killed in Indian electoral violence

BOMBAY (R) — At least five people were killed in scattered violence Tuesday as Indians voted in the last main phase of generally peaceful elections expected to produce a hung parliament.

More than 200 million people were eligible to vote in 183 constituencies spread over 12 states in the third phase of elections that started on April 27.

By 5 p.m. (1130 GMT), most of India's 590 million eligible voters would have had the chance to pick their candidates in the world's biggest elections. Most opinion polls say no party or alliance will get an overall majority.

A clear picture of party strengths in the 545-seat parliament is expected by Saturday and attempts to form a coalition government, if the polls prove right, will follow.

The elections pit Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's Congress Party against the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the National Front-Left Front alliance and a variety of regional parties.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) said a policeman and his driver were killed and four police injured by a landmine planted by suspected Maoist guerrillas in the eastern state of Bihar.

It quoted official reports as saying three people were shot dead in a clash between rival political groups in the Bhojpur region of Bihar.

PTI said police had to fire into the air to disperse rival groups of activists in West Bengal. It also reported attacks on ballot boxes in Manipur in the northeast and said a candidate was beaten up by a crowd in the eastern state of Orissa.

Some 70 people have been killed during the elections, still far less than the 300 who

died in the last campaign in 1991.

In the troubled northern state of Jammu and Kashmir, where police and hospitals say more than 20,000 people have been killed in a six-year separatist insurgency, voting was taking place for the first time since the revolt began.

Voting was in Hindu-dominated areas, where sympathy for the rebellion is slight. Elections in the heavily Muslim Kashmir Valley, where support for the insurgency is strong, are scheduled for late May.

Officials say more than 1.5 million security personnel have been deployed to prevent disruption of voting, which was staggered to allow them to move around to protect the poll.

In Bombay, the country's commercial hub and the scene of communal riots and a series of bomb attacks three years ago in which hundreds of people were killed, security in the city's six constituencies was unprecedented, police said.

They said more than 2,000 people with criminal backgrounds had been rounded up and detained as a precaution.

"The whole of Bombay is on alert. Every single policeman is on duty, except those who are sick," said senior policeman P.K.B. Chakravarty.

The mood was generally pessimistic about the poll outcome in financial markets concerned about the future of radical economic reforms Mr. Rao introduced in 1991.

"If the Congress or the BJP form a government, it's fine with the market. If they have to form a coalition government with other partners, the question arises what compromises they have to make to continue with reforms," said stockbroker Shirish Dave.

U.S. commander sees no lasting solution on Okinawa

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan (R) — The outgoing commander of U.S. forces in Japan said Tuesday a lasting solution to the issue of U.S. military bases on Okinawa was impossible because the matter involved too many interests.

Lieutenant General Richard Myers also forecast it could take longer than expected, possibly up to two years, for Japan and the United States to work out how military ties could be expanded so Tokyo could play a bigger role in Asian security.

But Gen. Myers, who for two-and-a-half years has guided U.S. military ties with Japan through one of their most difficult periods, said he was leaving his job content that the alliance was in better shape than ever.

Gen. Myers, who returns to Washington next month as assistant to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Shalikashvili, dealt with four Japanese prime ministers during his term.

He also had to cope with the fallout from the rape of an Okinawan schoolgirl by three U.S. servicemen last September, an incident that set off demands to close all U.S. bases on the island in southern Japan by 2015.

About 70 per cent of all U.S. military installations and about half of the 47,000 U.S. troops in Japan are based on Okinawa, which makes up less than one per cent of Japan's land area.

Asked if the Okinawa issue had been solved by decisions last month to shut some U.S. military bases and return to the owners up to 20 per cent of land they occupied, Gen. Myers had no hesitation in replying "no".

"It wasn't solved when we got here. It's not going to be solved. You'll never solve it," General Myers said in an interview with several news organisations.

"As long as we're here (in Japan) we'll have an impact on the community in which we live and work and play," he said.

Gen. Myers said competing interests of U.S. strategic needs, the Japanese central government's needs, and the demands of various factions on Okinawa made the issue too complex for a lasting solution.

"All you can do is mitigate as much as possible and make it as painless as possible," he said.

Gen. Myers, an air force pilot who still flies F-15s, said the final shape of a new U.S.-Japan security alliance was in the

hands of the Japanese government and people.

During President Bill Clinton's visit to Tokyo last month, the two countries agreed to review guidelines under which Japanese forces could support the U.S. military in the event of threats to peace in Asia.

Under Japan's pacifist constitution, its forces can act only to defend Japan against direct attack.

The guidelines under review could lead to Japanese forces supporting the United States in so-called "collective defence" actions when Japan might act even if it was not under direct attack.

General Myers said the review had been expected to take six months to one year but he now believed, because of the sensitivity of the issues, it could take one to two years.

Subjects under review have not been revealed in detail, but Gen. Myers said one way Japan might help would be in using its minesweepers in case of a conflict involving North Korea.

The human cost of war breaking out with North Korea would be "astronomical", Gen. Myers said Tuesday, urging the country to abandon its current path.

Gen. Myers said it was difficult to predict where North Korea was headed.

"A soft-landing or an explosion or an implosion, I just don't know," said the general, whose term expires next month. "We just probably don't know."

"All I know is that we have got to be ready and we are obviously in the supporting role," he said, referring to U.S. forces in South Korea.

Gen. Myers noted that the commander of U.S. forces in South Korea, Gen. Gary Luck, had already warned that "the cost just in terms of lives alone would be astronomical" if war actually broke out on the Korean peninsula.

"Even if a favourable outcome would be successful, that campaign would still be so devastating that there has got to be another way around," he said.

"North Korea has a lot more to gain by joining the rest of the peace-loving nations in the region rather than continuing the current path."

"In the case of a conflict on the Korean peninsula, Japan, and the U.S. bases on Japan, are all going to be of a major role in terms of supporting that kind of contingency," the lieutenant-general said.

Duchess denies wanting to lift the lid on royals

LONDON (AFP) — The Duchess of York denied Tuesday a press report that she intended to publish a book lifting the lid on Britain's royal family. The right-wing tabloid Daily Express said Monday the duchess planned to write a manual for single working mothers, which she had promised publishers would be stuffed with "lots of gossip" about the royal family. A statement issued by the duchess's new American public relations adviser Howard Rubinstein confirmed that she had met publishers in New York last week. But it added: "While I am working on several literary projects, my plans are only in the very earliest stages. I have absolutely no intention, under any circumstances, of breaking any agreements I have made with Her Majesty the Queen for whom I have the utmost respect and whose friendship I value highly." The British press has reported that the duchess had pledged to the queen not to sell any account of her experiences with the royal family.

Girl with bullet in head to have operation in U.K.

LONDON (R) — An African orphan girl with a bullet lodged behind her eye will be flown to Britain for a life-saving operation, doctors said Tuesday. Five-year-old Teneh was wounded when she was caught in the crossfire of Sierra Leone's civil war in January last year and suffers from a speech impediment, deafness and impaired vision. The child, saved by her adoptive parents, has lived for 16 months with the bullet lying behind her right eye, perilously close to her brain. Doctors in Sierra Leone discovered the bullet when they X-rayed her head but did not have the equipment to operate. British charity worker Mark Cook has arranged for her to be flown to Britain for treatment this week. Leading the medical team is consultant facial surgeon Geoffrey Cheney, who told reporters: "Her injury is incompatible with life. You really would not have expected her to survive. If the bullet didn't kill her right out, you would have expected infection to have done so."

China punishes 20 police for drinking

BEIJING (R) — Authorities in eastern China's Shan-dong province have fired a traffic policeman and disciplined more than 20 other officers for drinking alcohol while at work, the China News Service said Monday. Since the drinking on the job ban was introduced on April 3, the deputy chief of a Traffic Police Regiment had been fired and over 20 police officers had been reprimanded, the agency said but gave no details. Police officers drinking on the job could become involved in accidents or misuse their guns or batons, said Meng Qingfeng, chief of the Shandong Provincial Public Security Bureau.

Milk cuts stroke risk in older men

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A couple of glasses of milk a day reduce the risk of strokes in older men by half, scientists said in a report released Monday, admitting they were baffled as to why. The report in the American Heart Association journal Stroke found that drinking about half a litre of milk (16 fluid ounces) a day reduces the risk of strokes by half in men between the ages of 55 and 68. Tests were conducted over 22 years among 3,150 Americans of Japanese descent living in Hawaii. The authors of the report from the Honolulu Heart Programme failed to establish a link between milk and frequency of stroke.



A woman wipes off lipstick from the face of Russian President Boris Yeltsin Tuesday after giving him a kiss in a village of the Narofominsk District, some 70 kilometres south-west of Moscow. The trip was part of Mr. Yeltsin's election campaign (Reuters photo)

Yeltsin hopes to unite all democratic candidates

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin said Tuesday he hoped to unite all the democratic candidates in the June presidential elections behind his candidacy, admitting that his victory was not a foregone conclusion.

Mr. Yeltsin, who is running neck-and-neck with Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov according to a recent opinion poll, said he was "not taking victory for granted" during a campaign visit to Narofominsk, about 100 kilometres southwest of Moscow.

"The opinion polls show that my popularity is rising, and I see that when I talk to people," Russian news agencies quoted Mr. Yeltsin as saying.

He said he hoped to "unite all the democratic candidates" contesting the elections.

"I am working actively to achieve such a union," Mr. Yeltsin said, adding that he was "satisfied" with his meeting Sunday with Yabloko party leader Grigory Yavlinsky, who is Mr. Yeltsin's chief rival in the reformist camp.

"Perhaps a second meeting will be needed... to define the conditions for our cooperation," Interfax News Agency quoted Mr. Yeltsin as saying.

After the meeting Sunday Mr. Yavlinsky insisted he would take part in the elections "in order to win," and there was "no talk of renouncing (my) candidacy."

Mr. Yavlinsky, speaking on Russia's NTV commercial television, said the meeting with Mr. Yeltsin, his second in five years, was held at Mr. Yeltsin's request.

Mr. Yeltsin said Tuesday he had also invited another reformist candidate, Svyatoslav Fyodorov, to hold talks.

Mr. Yavlinsky, Dr. Fyodorov and maverick Russian nationalist General Alexander Lebed have been discussing the possibility of forging a coalition, nicknamed the "third force," which may finally propose one joint candidate for president.

Mr. Yeltsin said he could "step by step reach an agreement with the (other) democratic candidates."

The first round is due on June 16, with a runoff set for July 7 if no candidate wins an absolute majority. Most opinion polls say Mr. Zyuganov will finish on top in the first round and would beat Mr. Yeltsin in a runoff.

However a survey released Sunday by the Ramir Institute predicted a Yeltsin win in the runoff.

Mr. Yeltsin, 65, said Tuesday he was working 18 to 20 hours a day, "busy with my presidential duties and my own campaign."

His political future was thrown into doubt when he was hospitalised in July and October last year for a heart condition, but he has been campaigning vigorously for a second term this year and fulfilling a demanding work schedule.



Street fighters with Charles Taylor NPFL defends their position in downtown Monrovia against the opposition forces of ULIMO-J. Fighting continued in the capital city Monrovia Monday despite a ceasefire due to take effect at noon (Reuters photo)

Rain calms Liberian gunbattles

MONROVIA (R) — Heavy overnight rain brought a lull in fighting in the Liberian capital early Tuesday as faction representatives and West African mediators gathered for talks in Ghana.

U.S. Marines opened fire to protect their embassy when fighting spread west to the city's Mamba Point district during a morning offensive Monday.

ECOMOG peacekeepers tried to keep the fighters out of the city centre, while mediators rallied support for Wednesday's West African summit, to be preceded by a foreign ministers' meeting Tuesday.

"Some fire was directed at one of the Marine emplacements and they did fire back," said U.S. Ambassador William Milam.

He said he was not aware of any casualties from the shooting, the second time Marines had opened fire to protect the embassy since battles in the city began a month ago.

A U.S. State Department spokesman said in Washington that the Marines "have no intention of intervening in the fighting" but "faction members would be very foolish indeed if they felt that there was any question on our eagerness or our willingness to defend ourselves".

Last Tuesday, Marines killed three Liberians and wounded one.

Main faction leader Charles Taylor, who has said he will not go to the peace talks in Accra, announced a unilateral ceasefire to begin at midday Monday but sporadic gunfire continued into the evening. The shooting outside the embassy took place at around 11 a.m.

Diplomats say West African foreign ministers are unlikely to find any quick alternative to last year's shaky peace accord.

But a West African envoy in the Ghanaian capital Accra, where the ministers were expected to meet Tuesday and their leaders Wednesday, noted that the accord signed in August 1995 called for disarmament and elections over one year.

"That programme is six months behind, so the foreign ministers and the heads of state should be looking at extending the timetable, apart from anything else," he said.

Senior delegates said the absence of Liberia's main faction chiefs, Mr. Taylor and Alhaji Kromah, would not sabotage the peace efforts.

The two men dominate an interim ruling council whose attempts to arrest Krahn warlord Roosevelt Johnson on murder charges sparked the outbreak of violence on April 6.

"Whether the faction leaders are

there or not the leaders of the sub-region in the committee of nine at summit level need to meet anyway," Nigerian Foreign Minister Tom Ikini said on radio.

Several ceasefires have come and gone. On Saturday mediators said Mr. Taylor had agreed to a truce, but he promptly denied it.

Commanders of Mr. Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and its Ulmo-K allies said they were aware of the ceasefire but would defend themselves if they were fired upon.

Thousands of people crowded into the port seeking boats to leave Liberia. About 2,000 people left on a rusting, overloaded Nigerian freighter Sunday, heading for Accra and Lagos.

Nigerian military leader General Sani Abacha is expected to attend the Accra summit. Nigeria leads the ECOMOG peacekeeping force and helped negotiate the peace accord signed last August which negotiators still view as the basis for a settlement.

Apart from a ceasefire in current fighting in Monrovia, the Accra talks will discuss a new timetable for disarmament and elections and how to reinforce the 10,000-strong ECOMOG force.

Cuban exile in Miami says Havana hired him to kill

MIAMI (R) — A Cuban immigrant claimed he was once a spy and hitman for the government of Fidel Castro, and authorities found his story credible enough to place him in protective custody, Miami police said Monday.

Roberto Martin Cabrera claimed that after he arrived in Miami, his contacts in the Cuban government ordered him to attack three prominent exile leaders and blow up their headquarters.

Police provided extra security for the three men who were Mr. Cabrera's alleged targets, Jorge Mas Canosa, Pepe Hernandez and Ninosa Perez, all from the Cuban American National Foundation.

"This man came to us with information that we considered credible enough to investigate," Miami Police Chief Donald Warshaw told reporters.

Mr. Cabrera, 26, said he was approached by Cuba's State Security Forces and asked to serve as a collaborator after his arrest in 1993 for attempting to leave Cuba by raft. He said government agents told him he would be released from prison only if he cooperated.

He left the island on Aug. 31, 1994, becoming one of 30,000 Cubans picked up at sea and taken to refugee camps at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba. He

said he was released in December, 1994, to the United States, where he established contact with Cuban officials who ordered him to attack the three exile leaders.

"I was told that the Cuban American National Foundation was a threat to the Cuban revolution and that it must be destroyed, and three people from the foundation had to disappear," Mr. Cabrera said in a statement.

But Mr. Cabrera had decided not to cooperate with the Cuban officials in the alleged plot to "destroy" the foundation, a Miami-based Cuban exile organisation known for its lobbying strength and adamant opposition to Cuba's Communist regime.

He went to the foundation at the end of April, which put him in contact with the FBI.

During a news conference Monday, foundation officials displayed messages Mr. Cabrera said he had received from the Cuban government, as well as devices such as a pen holder with a secret compartment and pieces of paper that could be dissolved in the mouth.

"Of course, when your life is threatened you take it seriously," Mr. Mas Canosa said.

A spokesman for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) said the agency could not comment on the case.

S. Korea's Kim to work for Korean reunification

SEOUL (R) — South Korean President Kim Young-Sam chose Tuesday a policy expert on North Korea to lead his ruling party and pledged to work for Korean reunification.

Lee Hong-Koo, who has twice headed the Unification Ministry, and was premier until last December, was selected at a New Korea Party national convention.

"We must as a party prepare for unification. No matter what changes may arise on the Korean peninsula, we must be ready and capable of linking these to unification," Mr. Kim told more than 1,000 cheering delegates.

"Unification is a necessity for achieving our goal of becoming a leading country in the 21st century. Our politics should help achieve this historic task," said Mr. Kim, who is president of the ruling party.

Mr. Kim and U.S. President Bill Clinton last month unveiled a proposal for four-nation talks involving the two Koreas, China and the United States to achieve a lasting peace on the Korean peninsula.

North and South Korea have been in an uneasy truce since the 1950-53 Korean War.

Mr. Lee headed the Unification Ministry in 1988 under then-President Roh Tae-Woo. Mr. Kim again gave him the unification post in 1994 for eight months before elevating him to the premiership.

Mr. Lee's appointment marks the start of a sweeping party reshuffle following general elections on April 11 in which the ruling camp lost its overall majority in the National Assembly. Minor cabinet changes could follow, according to political commentators.

"We have lots of promises to fulfil, and my task is to make sure they are kept," Mr. Lee told reporters. "I was asked to run and lead this party so that politics can progress to a higher level."

Mr. Lee ruled out a bid for the presidency in next year's elections. "I have no interest," he said.

Mr. Lee is a former scholar and a proven administrator. Since he apparently has no presidential ambitions, he was not likely to undermine Mr. Kim's authority during his remaining period in office, political commentators said.

Mr. Kim is barred by the constitution from seeking re-election after he ends his five-year presidency in February 1998.

The ruling party won 139 seats in the elections, 11 short of a simple majority in the 299-seat National Assembly. But it has added six more seats by reaching out to independents.

"So far we have 145 seats. But we are sure more independents and others will join our party to work with us," a New Korea Party spokesman said.

South Korea's opposition parties have declared war on Mr. Kim, demanding his party stop trying to build a majority or face a parliamentary boycott.

Veteran politicians Kim Dae-Jung and Kim Jong-Pil, who lead the two main opposition groups, met for the first time in seven years Saturday to suspend hostilities and join forces against the president.

Mr. Lee said parties should try to solve issues through dialogue and cooperation.

Clinton takes anti-smoking campaign to New Jersey

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton travels to New Jersey to make war on teenage smoking, but that may be a smokescreen for another campaign — to woo voters in a state that he won by only 80,000 votes in 1992.

The ninth-most populous state in the union with a healthy 15 electoral college votes, New Jersey is a must win for the Democrat in the November presidential election.

It is also a place where Senate majority leader Bob Dole, the presumptive Republican nominee, has a powerful ally in popular Republican Governor Christine Todd Whitman.

The trip is Mr. Clinton's third to the state since the start of the year, and he is scheduled to return next month to give a commencement address at Princeton University on June 4, the date of the New Jersey primary.

Although polls show Mr. Clinton about 20 points ahead of Sen. Dole nationally, White House officials say they are taking nothing for granted, particularly in crucial states like New Jersey.

"It's a swing state, it will be a close election," said one official. "We will play it hard all the way to the end."

Mr. Clinton is building Tuesday's trip, which is paid for by the Clinton-Gore '96 re-election campaign, around "Kick Butts Day," a national effort to educate and organise children against using tobacco.

He is scheduled to speak in the afternoon at a high school in Woodbridge, New Jersey, one of 13 cities around the nation participating in the anti-tobacco effort.

"Students have come together to really put a spotlight on those commercial establishments that make it easy for kids who are underage who shouldn't be buying tobacco products to, in fact, buy them," White House spokesman Mike McCurry said of the "Kick Butts Day" campaign.

He said the students will highlight advertisements and selling techniques that entice teenagers to buy cigarettes.

Mr. Clinton has spoken out against teen smoking in recent months and he hosted a high-profile meeting at the White House in March with 40 state attorneys general.



Pro-independence dissident Peter Huang hugs an old friend at the headquarters of the opposition Democratic Progressive Party in Taipei Tuesday. Mr. Huang, 59, returned home after 26 years in exile after attempting murder to topple Taiwan's 'Chiang dynasty' (Reuters photo)

Taiwanese dissident not sorry over attempt to kill Chiang

TAIPEI (R) — A lifelong independence advocate, home after 26 years in exile, said Tuesday he did not regret attempting murder to topple Taiwan's "Chiang dynasty" and was delighted by the recent arrival of democracy in his homeland.

Peter Huang, 59, said to be Taiwan's last exiled political activist, returned home Monday to make his first public appearance since failing in an attempt to shoot the then-Vice Premier Chiang Ching-Kuo in New York in 1970.

In an interview with Reuters, Mr. Huang said he had no regrets because his attempt to assassinate the son and political heir of then-President Chiang Kai-Shek seemed his only choice.

"At that time, it seemed quite clear that by preparing Chiang Ching-Kuo as his successor, Chiang Kai-Shek seemed to be in a process of setting up a Chiang dynasty," the quietly spoken Mr. Huang said.

He said the U.S. government's invitation to the younger Chiang indicated Washington, too, endorsed the arrangement.

Washington maintained full diplomatic relations with Nationalist-ruled Taiwan until 1979 when it formally recognised the Communist Chinese government in Beijing, which defeated Chiang's Nationalist troops in the 1949 civil war.

Mr. Huang, a poet in high school, was a doctoral candidate in sociology at Cornell University when he decided in 1970 to make an attempt on Chiang Ching-Kuo's life. At Cornell he befriended Lee Teng-Hui, today Taiwan's president, who was elected in the island's first democratic presidential elections on March 23.

"It seemed to me at the time... something had to be done to make it less easy for Chiang Kai-Shek... (and) possibly to open up political space for Taiwan," Mr. Huang said.

Mr. Huang said what he did was right at

that political moment. "I think it is important to take time and space into account in this case. If the political context is as it is today, I don't think I would ever do the same thing."

"In this case, yes, I regret that I was left with no alternative because of the political context at the time."

Mr. Huang fired one shot at Chiang outside a New York hotel where Chiang was about to give a speech. He and co-conspirator Cheng Tze-Tsai were immediately arrested by the U.S. police. No one was hurt.

Just as Mr. Huang feared, Chiang succeeded Chiang Kai-Shek three years after his father's death in 1975 and served as president until his own death in 1988.

Mr. Huang and Mr. Cheng fled prosecution after being released on bail to begin what became decades of life "underground". Charges against him in Taiwan have expired and he does not face prosecution.

"On the one hand, the U.S. is a great democracy. But on the other hand, it seemed to be tolerating quite a few dictators in East Asia — in Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines and Vietnam," Mr. Huang said. "I wanted to send a signal to Washington that Taiwanese are not likely to tolerate that kind of situation for long."

Mr. Huang was evasive about details of his exiled life, spent in the United States and several other foreign countries.

"Life was okay, I lived like an ordinary person... The only bitter thing was that I could not go home... This kind of bitter feeling of not being able to go home became unbearable year after year," he said.

Though impressed by Taiwan's recent democratic reforms, Mr. Huang said he would stay involved in social movements and seek Taiwan's full independence.

Russia holds scientist for nuclear smuggling

MOSCOW (R) — Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) has arrested a scientist for manufacturing and smuggling abroad nuclear material which could be used for military purposes, ITAR-TASS news agency said Tuesday.

TASS, quoting an FSB spokesman in the Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk, said the scientist, using his own technology, had produced at least one kilogramme of the material. TASS said the material had a dual use but did not name it.

TASS did not name the scientist or say when he had been detained. Nor did it identify the country to which the radioactive substance had been smuggled.

It said investigators were trying to find out who had helped the scientist produce

the material and take it abroad.

The scientist used his own laboratory at a Krasnoyarsk institute to produce it, TASS said.

A duty officer of the Krasnoyarsk branch of FSB and several of FSB officials, contacted by telephone, said they knew nothing about the case.

There was no immediate comment from the FSB's central office in Moscow.

Western countries, Germany especially, have expressed concern over illegal nuclear exports from post-Soviet Russia and security conditions in warehouses where such material is kept.

Russia says its arms-related radioactive material is held in safe conditions.

Indonesian businessman escapes from jail

JAKARTA (R) — Businessman Eddy Tansil, serving a 20-year sentence in Indonesia's biggest bank scandal, walked out of a high-security Jakarta prison after bribing wardens, news reports and a lawyer said Tuesday.

Justice Minister Utuyo Usman immediately sacked the prison chief of Cipinang Penitentiary in eastern Jakarta, from where Mr. Tansil escaped Monday, the official Antara News Agency said.

It quoted Mr. Usman as saying preliminary investigations indicated Mr. Tansil escaped with the collaboration of prison officials. The minister said Mr. Tansil apparently left Cipinang for a medical check-up Monday unaccompanied by guards and did not return.

A nationwide search has been ordered for the fugitive and airports have been alerted,

Antara said. Luhut Pangaribuan, director of the Jakarta-based Legal Aid Institute, told Reuters Mr. Tansil escaped from the Cipinang prison Monday night.

"I have learned about the escape and I can tell you that it is positive Mr. Tansil escaped last night. But I can't give you other details," he said.

Mr. Tansil's lawyer, Mr. Suwadi, told Reuters he had not been informed of the escape and declined to comment.

Mr. Tansil, an ethnic Chinese businessman who headed the Golden Key Group, was sentenced in September 1994 to a 17-year prison term for defrauding state-owned Bank Pembangunan Indonesia (BAPINDO) of \$430 million. A higher court later increased the sentence to 20 years.

Excavating Early Bronze Age houses at Tell Al Handa

By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

Near that history-rich intersection where the Zarqa River meets the Jordan Valley floor, American scholar Meredith Chesson from Harvard University is navigating the less travelled intersection where archaeology and ethnography meet, to come up with new interpretations of how people built and used their houses in the Early Bronze Age, some four thousand years ago.

Ms. Chesson, an anthropologist by training and an exchange scholar this year at the University of California at Berkeley, leads a multinational team that has just finished its third season of excavation at Tell Al Handa South. The site is located in the Jordan Valley foothills about 100 metres above and on the south bank of the Wadi Zarqa. The large, 15-hectare site was first identified in the 1930s from its abundant surface pottery and architectural remains, including a dolmen, building walls, and much of the town's outer fortification wall.

The pottery from the initial surface survey in 1993 revealed occupation at the site throughout the Early Bronze Age (c. 3400-2000 BC), with the most concentrated human occupation in the EB II and III periods (c. 3150-2350 BC). One reason this site was chosen for excavation is that other scholars who have studied nearby sites (such as Svend Helms, who excavated Chalcolithic-EB II period Tell Umm Hamad) suggested that Tell Al Handa South could shed new light on the process of ancient urbanisation in the central Jordan Valley around the Zarqa triangle. Comparative studies of ceramic remains at sites in this region indicate that some smaller settlements and farmsteads may have been abandoned during the EB III period, when Tell Al

Handa South's occupation was "exploding", but were rehoused again in the EB IV period.

Three seasons of excavations since then and the opening of some 400 square metres of remains have started to uncover the structural remains of an Early Bronze Age walled town, with ancient deposits measuring two-to-four metres deep throughout the site. The project's main goal has been "to identify and excavate domestic architecture, in order to gain more information concerning the social and economic frameworks structuring life within the Early Bronze Age walled settlements." Ms. Chesson told the Jordan Times in a recent interview in Amman. The findings from the site would also allow for comparisons with other EB towns excavated in Jordan and Palestine, such as Zeraqa, Arad, Yarmouth, Bab Edh-Dhra and Numeira, and also with ethnographic house-holds from Middle Eastern and other contexts.

A large EB town

Tell Al Handa South is one of the largest EB towns in the Levant, one of only a handful of 15-20-hectare EB towns, compared to the more common town size of around 10 hectares. The substantial fortification system has not been excavated, but seven-metre-wide stone wall foundations are visible in the ground, pierced by at least two large gates and fortified by several buttresses.

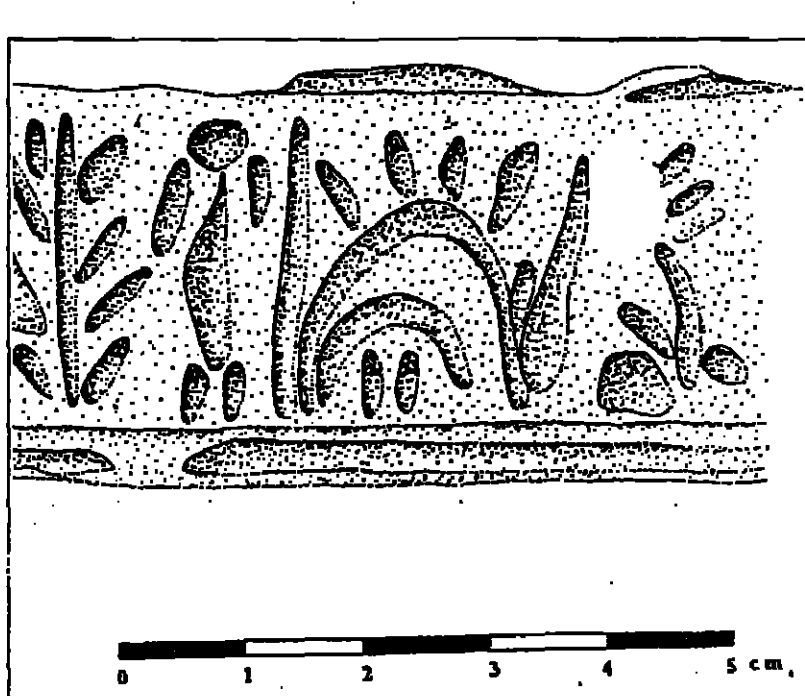
In pursuit of its aims, the team has uncovered a sequence of domestic structures, courtyards and other associated facilities that provide a rich basis for comparison with other EB towns in Jordan and the surrounding regions. Yet, the houses that have been uncovered do not neatly fit into the categories that archaeologists have designated for this period; so, Ms.

Chesson has proposed a new manner of interpreting ancient architecture that takes into account human habits that still define Arab society and culture today.

The uncovered architectural remains comprise a series of homes with courtyards that were used, modified and reused during four phases of the town's history. Some architectural elements (pillar bases, door sockets, internal steps) are typical of classic EB "broadroom" architecture — though the overall layout of the houses is not.

The earliest phase comprised two stone-built structures with external entrances, internal staircases, and remains of a hearth with several serving vessels (a basin, a bowl and a jar). In the next phase of use, the floors were relevelled and plastered, walls were extended to form new rooms, a large open area was created for some purpose, and the hearth, doorway and stairs continued in use. During the third phase of occupation, yet more new buildings were constructed, new courtyards were added, and all the walls were raised by at least two courses of stones, as many existing spaces and facilities continued in use. From this phase the excavators recovered a ceramic cylinder seal, a small jar, and a limestone game board.

One of the new structures from phase three showed evidence of four episodes of re-flooring. It also accommodated a bench, a pillar with a small hearth near it, and a mudbrick silo inside a plaster-lined pit. Inside an adjacent pit was a ceramic basin, and nearby was an inset mortar and a stone-lined semi-circular installation. In courtyards adjacent to this house the excavators identified two fire pits that were reused heavily, and that contained high concentrations of ash, charcoal, burnt bone, burnt mudbrick and pottery shards, some of which will provide radiocarbon dates.



Tell el-Handa South

The excavated cylinder seal, with some typical Assyrian and Mesopotamian motifs, but also showing some unusual floral designs (Drawing by Meredith Chesson and Ian Kuijt)

bon dates.

The fourth and last phase of EB occupation saw the inhabitants cut into earlier phases in order to make a flat surface on which they built new houses, one of which included a water drain or channel running downhill to the town's fortification wall. The courtyard of a house from this phase also had a large fire pit, stone platforms, an inset basin and a hearth. A nearby house had a massive limestone grinding stone (100 x 50 x 50 cm), and a wide, shallow pit with a small stone platform, associated with much dark ash and ashy soil. Ms. Chesson suggests this was probably a bread oven, in good association with the large grinding stone.

Form suggests function

The ceramics from the excavation include most major forms found at other EB III sites, including classic storage, serving and cooking vessels, with medi-

um-size storage jars apparently the most common. Very few shards from pithos vessels were recovered. Ms. Chesson notes that the ceramics finds would themselves lead one to expect to find in the architecture signs of storage facilities, hearths, benches, raised platforms and inset mortars — which is precisely what was uncovered.

The ceramics, other material finds, and animal and plant remains did not indicate any international trading contacts, but rather portrayed a town that relied on agriculture and pastoralism for its livelihood. Animal bones were mainly of goat, sheep, pig and cattle, and spindle whorls and loom weights reflected economic and crafts activities related to pastoralism. The pottery reflected traditions common in the north and south Jordan Valley, and also some distinct shapes produced locally, but without signs of long-distance trade. The cylinder seal is locally made in a rare technique of low-fired ceramics. Its design reflects some typical Assyrian and Mesopotamian motifs, such as a standing person and a star-like structure, but it also contains some enigmatic plant-like flourishes that have no known parallels.

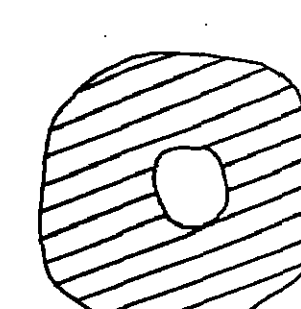
"when an excavated architectural complex does not fit neatly into any of these categories, or more problematically, combines significant defining features from more than one architectural type?"

She poses the question because the Tell Al Handa South houses seem to juxtapose elements from both public and private buildings, i.e. the typical domestic pottery and installations, but also the presence of an "administrative" artifact (the cylinder seal) and a water channel/drain. The answer, she also suggests, is to expand the internal complexity of existing models for EB architecture, and thereby "to explore the diversity of architectural spaces and related activities in excavated sites, hopefully to facilitate a more holistic reconstruction of the social, political and economic frameworks of life in EB walled communities."

Differing levels of privacy

Using this approach, she offers a tentative interpretation of the Tell Al Handa South houses as representing "households in which the inhabitants designate the courtyard areas as receiving areas (with less restricted access)," while the more private quarters are off the courtyard. She believes that such examples are well documented historically and ethnographically. Roman houses in North Africa are reported to have areas where visitors and clients were received and business was conducted (the peristyle, vestibule and exedra) without disrupting the private life of the family members elsewhere in the house. Ms. Chesson concludes: "In essence, the Roman house distinguished between differing levels of privacy, and the multidimensional concept of the 'ontology of private and public space' was reflected in their architecture."

She also sees this pattern repeated in contemporary Middle Eastern and Arab homes, "where much political, economic and social negotiating takes place in the reception areas of house-



household units, she notes. Some of these negotiations take place in public spaces, others in the home with its semi-public/semi-private spaces.

By interpreting ancient structures through the combined lenses of architecture, history and ethnography, Ms. Chesson says, "we expand our vision of the past, making our reconstructions more human, complex and full of contradictions, and more representative of human society."

Enduring mystery

Why the town was abandoned at the end of the EB III period is part of one of the great mysteries of this region's ancient history: The almost universal mass dispersal of settled towns at the start of the EB IV period in Jordan and Palestine, was done in favour of smaller farmsteads and nomadic communities. Whether this was due to climatic, economic and/or political reasons remains to be determined by historians and archaeologists. One common theory is that the withdrawal of Egyptian political control at the end of the EB III period devastated the area economically, and the urban economies could no longer sustain themselves in the previous form, with the exception of only a few known towns from the EB IV period, such as Khirbet Iskandar on the Wadi Wala.

The excavations at Tell Al Handa South have been sponsored and funded by Harvard University, the Mellon Foundation, the American School of Prehistoric Research, the National Science Foundation (USA), the Wenner-Gren Foundation, the British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History, and the Sigma Xi Foundation, in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities of Jordan. No further excavations are planned at the site for the time being.



A bread oven and large grinding from an excavated EB house (Photo by Meredith Chesson)



One of the excavated water channels associated with a house at Early Bronze Age Tell Al Handa South (Photo by Hermann Genz)

King

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Kohl said he highly appreciated Jordan's role in the peace process, and lauded King Hussein's courage, political wisdom and the central role Jordan is playing to strengthen the foundations of security and stability in the region. He pledged his country's continuous support for the Jordanian economy and projects in the region.

King Hussein told reporters later that the meeting with the chancellor "offered a new chance for me to express my respect and those of the Jordanian people to the German people and government."

"We discussed all the Middle East issues, Jordanian-German relations and aspirations for the future and I thank the chancellor for this opportunity and I am deeply satisfied with the outcome of

the meeting," he said.

The meeting was attended by Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh and Jordanian Ambassador to Germany Hussein Hamami.

The King, accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Noor, arrived in Bonn on Tuesday on a brief working visit to Germany.

King due in Cairo

King Hussein will arrive in Egypt on Wednesday for talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on the Middle East process, the Associated Press reported from Cairo.

Government officials said the two were expected to discuss the status of negotiations in the wake of Israel's military offensive in southern Lebanon.

Information Minister Marwan Mouasher said Monday that the King would speak with Mr. Mubarak about the future of Arab East

Jerusalem and the fate of Palestinians displaced in Arab-Israeli wars.

Egyptian President Mubarak told an Egyptian daily that a three-way summit involving himself, King Hussein and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat will now take place "next week" in Cairo.

"Initiatives are under way to organise the summit for next week," Mr. Mubarak told Al Massa, during a visit to the Sinai desert to open the region's first modern hospital.

On Sunday an Egyptian official said the summit would happen this week, possibly on Wednesday. Mr. Mubarak did not say why it had been delayed.

"There are certain forces who do not want to see peace or a final solution which is why we must expect acts of violence and terrorism to happen from time to time," he said, adding that the peace process must "go forward."

Regent urges free trade accord

(Continued from page 1)

tude of specialisation it is handling, including trade and industry, and tourist investments between Jordan and Egypt."

The Crown Prince stressed the importance of crystallising a joint Jordanian-Egyptian perception at the Cairo summit.

He voiced hope that regional cooperation be initiated between the East Mediterranean countries on the one hand and the oil producing and the West Mediterranean countries on the other.

Prince Hassan said that hosting the Palestinian-Israeli meeting in Taba few days ago

reflected the keen interest of Egypt and Jordan to see the Palestinian identity on the Palestinian national soil recognised and respected.

On Jordanian-Egyptian relations, Prince Hassan said that structuring the meetings by the official sector and through the meetings of private sector representatives were useful. The Crown Prince said he made a proposal on Tuesday that universities, intellectual institutions and information centres play a role in setting priorities of political and economic dialogue, whether at the pan Arab or at the European levels.

Israel, U.N.

(Continued from page 1)

will be conveyed to the United States and France, the two major Western powers to

be represented in the monitoring committee, said the officials.

Other member nations of the committee are Israel, Syria and Lebanon.

Peres

(Continued from page 1)

will be elected, God forbid, they will erect a Palestinian state," he said.

"But we will return security to the hands of Israeli army. We are not in favour of a Palestinian state, we are in favour of self-rule. That's the difference."

Israelis will elect their prime minister directly for the first time in the election along with members of parliament.

Mr. Peres also explained the Labour Party's decision to drop opposition to the creation of an independent Palestinian state from its political platform.

"We must have a free hand in the negotiations with the Palestinians and we stick by three principles: Jerusalem will remain the unified capital of Israel, the Jordan Valley will be our security border and we will no longer rule

over another people," he said.

Israel and the Palestinians launched talks on a final peace settlement in the Egyptian resort of Taba on Sunday. They are not expected to start tackling the main issues — including the future of Jerusalem, Jewish settlements and the borders of a Palestinian entity — until after the elections.

Mr. Netanyahu accused the Labour Party of supporting the creation of a Palestinian state and giving up on the "unification of Jerusalem."

He also said he would strengthen Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

However, the Likud leader denied a newspaper report he planned to propose a government of national unity between his party and Labour after the elections.

Mr. Peres said earlier he would never join a cabinet headed by Mr. Netanyahu if he lost the elections.

The Labour Party laun-

ched its media campaign with a pro-peace offensive putting slain premier Rabin in the front line.

One ad, published in Tuesday's newspapers bears the slogan "This Peace Cannot be Stopped" alongside a picture of Mr. Peres and Mr. Rabin together at the giant peace rally in Tel Aviv on Nov. 4, the night Mr. Rabin was killed by a Jewish extremist opposed to the Palestinian peace process.

Labour campaign officials said a video clip due to be broadcast beginning Wednesday would also show Mr. Rabin and Mr. Peres side-by-side with the message, "Continue the peace."

Mr. Rabin, a stern former army chief, led Labour to victory in 1992 elections and subsequently negotiated historic autonomy agreements with the PLO.

Mr. Peres, the main architect of the peace plan, was foreign minister at the time but has never had Mr. Rabin's success in reassuring voters

Liberalisation key to emerging markets — World Bank

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Developing countries which liberalise their trade and finance tend to integrate better into the world economy and grow faster in a virtuous cycle which rapidly promotes prosperity, a World Bank report said.

Seeking to find out why some developing countries have "emerged" while others stagnate, the report, released simultaneously in Washington, London and at a United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) meeting here, draws a link between integration, growth and liberalisation.

Fast integrators have been the Asian "tiger" nations while slow integrators are most of the low-income countries in sub-Saharan Africa and middle income countries in Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa.

Policies found to have a strong bearing on the pace of integration include macro-economic factors (stability of fiscal deficits and real exchange rates), trade reform, and physical infrastructure.

The World Bank, which

has come under fire from many developing countries struggling to implement its structural adjustment programmes, charged that some nations were slow to integrate due partly to real internal and external factors, but also due to "perceptions of trade barriers".

Although there are genuine costs of integration, some fears are exaggerated, the report said. "Tariff barriers are much lower now than when the newly industrialising countries of East Asia started their industrialisation drive in the 1960s."

It cited "real" external obstacles as spreading anti-dumping practices, which have risen steadily since 1990, agricultural protection and the multi-fibre agreement (MFA), a compulsory export tax on developing countries' textiles and clothing which ranges from 16 to 48 per cent.

Anti-dumping was "rarely motivated by sensible economic criteria" and the MFA was "a major distortion to world trade". Both should be challenged at every opportunity, the bank said.

The report noted primary commodity producing countries also tended to lag integration but Chile, Malaysia, Morocco and Turkey "suggest commodity production in itself does not condemn a country to low productivity and inability to diversify".

Fast integrators, typically with high economic growth rates, had taken "internal" measures such as strengthening the private sector, attracting foreign direct investment and developing power, transport and telecommunication infrastructures.

The bank warned that the gap between the emerging and lagging countries was rapidly growing wider and that the longer a developing country held off integrating into the world economy, the higher the cost of doing so would be.

In the last decade, the ratio of trade to gross domestic product actually fell in 44 out of 93 developing countries another 17 only experienced moderate rises. Three quarters of the large increase was accounted for by just 10 countries.

OECD sees further sharp decline in official development aid

PARIS (AFP) — Development aid from the 22 members of the development assistance committee (DAC) fell by somewhere between five and 10 per cent in 1995 from the 1994 level of \$59.1 billion, according to OECD estimates cited here Tuesday.

Japan remains the number one donor, but France probably overtook the United States as the runner-up in absolute terms, U.S. aid chief Brian Atwood, quoting preliminary DAC figures, told correspondents.

Mr. Atwood, administrator of USAID, the U.S. foreign aid agency, said the latest data compiled by DAC indicated that U.S. official development assistance (ODA), which totalled \$9.9 billion in 1994, was down by 26 per cent last year.

The overall DAC total, which already fell by eight per cent in real terms in 1994, continued its decline

last year, according to the figures, presented to a DAC high-level meeting.

"We have a serious problem," Mr. Atwood said. "It would appear that the French will become the number two donors when the statistics are finalized."

"Now think about that," he added. "France is a country of 60 million people. We are a country of 280 million. Our economy is five and a half times the size of France's. And yet, in absolute terms, they are the number two donor."

The U.S. official said a further 23 per cent decline in U.S. foreign aid is expected this year, but he sees better prospects for the 1997 budget.

Mr. Atwood said he had told cooperation ministers and aid agency chiefs of DAC member countries that the U.S. was "going through a massive structural adjustment

programme" and that both parties in the U.S. Congress were committed to achieving a balanced federal budget.

However, he said, the U.S. administration sees investment in foreign assistance as a matter of "enlightened self-interest" in an increasingly competitive world, with aid ultimately helping to increase U.S. market share in the developing world.

Mr. Atwood stressed that aid could be a major instrument in helping to prevent crises, and noted that peacekeeping operations were now costing the international community some \$5 billion a year.

In addition, donor countries are spending some \$4 billion annually on assistance for displaced persons and refugees.

The total of which had doubled over the past decade to 42 million people worldwide.

Iraq lures farmers to send produce to state silos

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq's government is preparing for another year of food self-sufficiency under crippling U.N. trade sanctions by trying to ensure farmers send this year's harvest to its silos.

As an incentive to farmers to shun the black market, the government decided this week to offer last year's inflated prices again to wheat and barley growers in the country.

For a tonne of good wheat a farmer will get last year's price of 105,000 dinars which was then worth about \$88 but is now the equivalent of about \$150. For a tonne of barley, farmers will get 60,000 dinars.

State-run newspapers report daily on the harvest's progress, now in full swing in the central and southern parts of Iraq. About 2,000 combine harvesters were reaping fields in 12 provinces, they said Tuesday.

The trade ministry, in charge of Iraq's rationing system which keeps millions of Iraqis just above subsistence level, is authorised to fine or jail farmers failing to send crops to state-run stores.

But Baghdad traders said they did not expect farmers to violate ministry rules as its subsidies were higher than rates currently prevalent for wheat and barley on the black market.

The ministry gives each Iraqi six kilograms of flour a month as part of its meagre rationing system which also includes paltry amounts of rice, cooking oil, sugar and tea.

Despite efforts to cultivate the largest area possible, Iraq has failed to meet the demand for essentials like flour.

Iraqi and U.N. Officials blame shortages of machinery, insecticides, herbicides and seeds for the shortfalls.

No forecasts are available on this year's output but a U.N. report issued late last year said Iraq would at least need to import two million tonnes of flour in 1996 to meet demand.

The U.N. figures put Iraq's 1995 wheat harvest at about 1.5 million tonnes, hardly enough to meet one third of its needs.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can easily arrange a meeting today with a bigwig who can give you support for some pet project you have in mind. Later tonight, you can have a pleasant evening with close friends and loved ones for some pleasing times.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Listen to the suggestions of a good friend today which can be most helpful in gaining your finest ambitions. Later follow them. Later this evening you can go out on the town with your mate and have a pleasant time together.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) If you take your loved one along in the business world today, you can accomplish a great deal through team work at this time. Later tonight, with the assistance of a knowledgeable individual you can be very successful.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Understand what it is your fellow associates expect of you and try to please them more at this time. Show you are a hard worker and are willing to do whatever tasks are necessary for success.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Your daily routines can be made to work more profitably for you today if you add a new twist to them. Later this evening is a good time to gain the assistance of a knowledgeable individual on some new projects.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You can be with fellow associates you enjoy the most and also have pleasant recreation together. A civic affair is beneficial if you put as much effort as is possible for you to be noticed by those in charge.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Be with your loved ones and make the improvements which are needed in your home. Invite close friends in whom you've been neglecting for some time and you can make a good impression on them for the days ahead.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Early today make appointments to meet with charming persons you like for pleasure mutually enjoyable. Later this evening you can go out on the town with your loved one and have some pleasant times.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Be sure to cement better relations with those at home today with whom you have mutual interests and you will have some good times together. You can be quite prosperous if you pay attention to the advice of a knowledgeable person.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) State your finest personal aims to those who can assist you in gaining them. Try not to spend too much money or you could find yourself without any funds for the lean times which could be present.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Stop dreaming so much and get into practical affairs which can bring you the profits and prestige you desire. Show some common sense for completing whatever project you are currently involved in at this time.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Plan some entertainment and today invite your good friends and show how much they mean to you. Be courteous and charming to those in authority, so that you can receive the recognition you desire for your efforts.

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine

Likud leader to lower taxes, streamline Israeli economy if elected as prime minister

TEL AVIV (AP) — Presenting a sweeping vision of Israel as a leading economic power, opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu Monday promised to slash taxes, free up the economy and sell off state assets if elected prime minister.

"Israel could have a brilliant future," the Likud Party leader told engineers and architects gathered in Tel Aviv. But its potential is stifled by "one of the most controlled economies in the West," he said.

In a message reminiscent of 1980s U.S. Republican campaigns, Mr. Netanyahu argued that across-the-board reductions in individuals' income taxes will stimulate economic activity and ultimately increase government revenue.

"I will lower taxes (and) enact a massive cut in the bureaucracy that strangles business, (making) the economy much more open, much more free, much more healthy," he emphasised.

The initial losses could be financed by a speedy sale of "at least 50 state-owned companies" as well as the state's reserves of land, he argued.

Mr. Netanyahu noted some Israelis now pay 60 per cent of their earnings back to the government — "hardly an incentive to work."

Despite Mr. Netanyahu's pro-business stance, most Israeli industry and economic leaders appear to support Prime Minister Shimon Peres, partly for fear that a right-wing government could end the peacemaking that has

fuelled the past years' economic boom.

Mr. Netanyahu, whose party has long favoured Israeli control over the West Bank and Gaza, has opposed the Israel-PLO accords granting Palestinians autonomy in those areas. But Mr. Netanyahu said he accepts the changes and will keep talking peace with the Arabs — "only more cautiously."

Unveiling his economic programme Monday, he accused the current Labour Party government of fostering a false sense of prosperity by borrowing billions of dollars from abroad.

He also denied Israel's economic growth — which totalled some 40 per cent in the past five years —

Israeli kibbutzim get debt relief from banks, government

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's government, two main kibbutz movements and seven commercial banks signed an agreement Monday to rid collective farms of nearly six billion shekels (\$1.9 billion) in debt.

Under the arrangement, some kibbutzim will have to hand over about two billion shekels' worth of land to the government. Banks that forgive kibbutz debt will receive proceeds from any sale of the land by the government over the next 25 years.

Commercial banks will account for 65 per cent of the debt write-off and the government for 35 per cent.

The latest debt accord was a supplement to an original debt agreement reached in 1989 covering about four billion shekels in debt.

The kibbutzim, which played an important role in the creation of the Jewish state, began as agricultural collectives but have become increasingly industrialised.

In recent years the heavy debt burden has threatened some of the communities

with insolvency.

The signing of the debt accord had been put in doubt by a legal opinion commissioned by a breakaway kibbutz group called The Settlements Headquarters, which contended that banks had charged illegal fees that added to the communities' debts.

But the main kibbutz movements Sunday decided to approve the accord with the government and banks.

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Herri Arnold and Mike Argleson

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

LYRDI
GWED
GRACIT
HERNET

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: - (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ABATE FLOUT JUSTLY SEXTON
Answer: You can have this at a comedy club — JEST FUN

THE Daily Crossword by Eugene Puffenberger

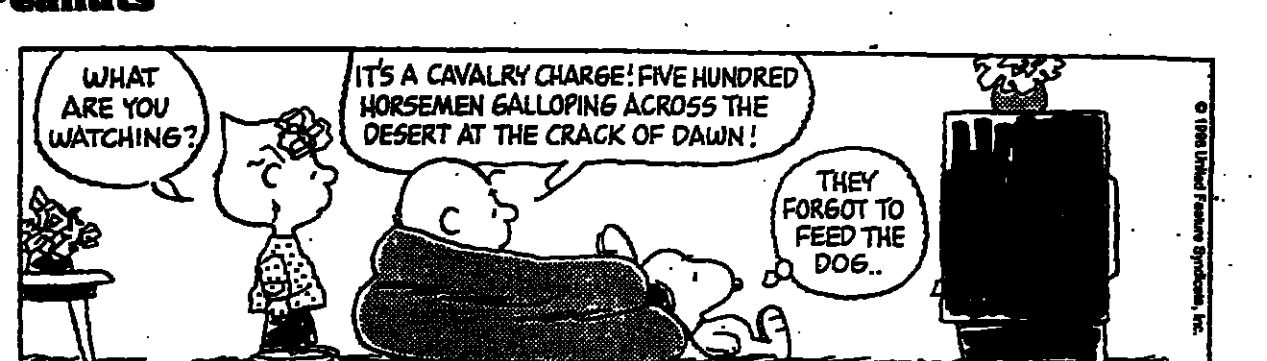
ACROSS
1 Mock
5 Lesson
10 French city
14 Bartlett or Bosc
15 Channels for conveying smoke
16 French department
17 Gaelic
18 Many plats
20 Salad ingredient
22 Negative
23 Draw a bead on
24 Many fish
27 — Baba
30 Indian
31 Capture
32 Flower cluster
34 Hebrew ascetic
39 — a man with
40 Toward the mouth
41 Charge with gas
44 Complain
46 Past
48 Wager
49 Container
50 Many floats
56 Anonym
57 Publicize
58 Heart chambers
62 Many sailors
65 Evict
66 Certain times
67 Knot again
68 Actress
69 Bancroft
70 Parched
79 Resource
71 Place for a chapeau

DOWN
1 Exceptional abbr
2 Mister in Munch
3 Allay
4 Altire
5 Union letters
6 Towhead
7 Vehicles
8 Old French coin
9 Inner: pref.

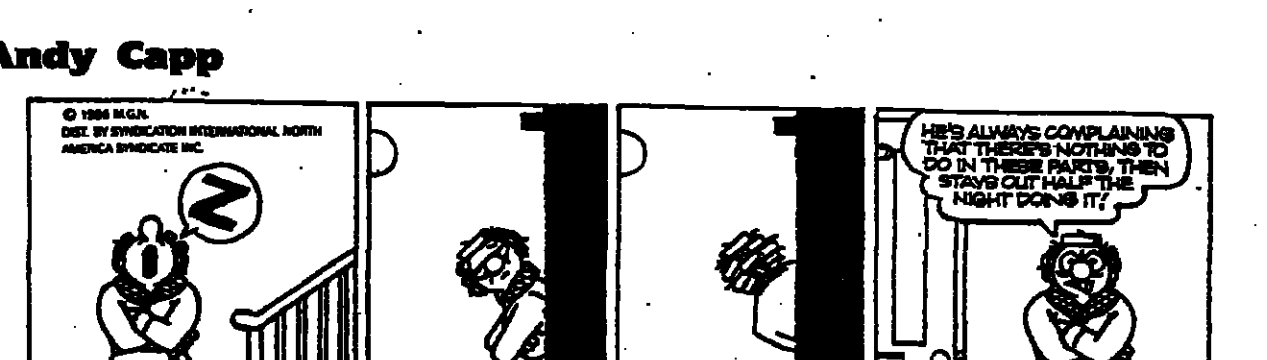
10 Baby problem
11 Fragrance
12 Inward
13 Cozy homes
19 Takes no food
21 Refuse
25 Corroded
26 Retainer
27 Song
28 Metallic material
29 Cake decorator
33 Timetable abbr
35 Brde
36 Author Ambler
37 Zola novel
38 First place
42 Italian epic poet
43 Self
44 Jump's kin
45 Kett of the comics
47 "Rock —" (hymn)
48 Ken's pal
50 Comes on

51 "Accept the end of —" (Frost)
52 Diet desirable
53 Demi—
54 Public disturbances
55 Ermine
59 Old Norse inscription
60 — It Romantic?
61 To — (exactly)
62 Monk
64 Solidify


Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Bahrain businesses seek 'terrorism' insurance

MANAMA (R) — Businesses in Bahrain are increasingly seeking insurance protection against sabotage and terrorism following recent waves of arson attacks and bombings, insurance officials said Tuesday.

They said damage caused by this week's wave of fires had cost insurance companies around \$5 million and that property insurance firms were unlikely to make a profit this year.

"More companies are seeking the cover. More companies are inquiring (about insurance) following recent sabotage and violence," said Iain Reid, general manager of Norwich Union Insurance Company in Bahrain.

"Property accounts are unlikely to make profit this year. The market is not going to do well," Mr. Reid, whose company also has offices in the United Arab Emirates and Oman, told Reuters.

"We have some establishments and houses fully covered against all dangers including sabotage and fires," said Mohammad Abdul Rahman, deputy chairman of the Bahrain Insurance Company.

"Demand for full insurance has slightly increased last year," he added.

"The need for full insurance in Bahrain against sabotage and terrorism is increasing. Businesses and establishments are making

more inquiries," another insurance company official said.

Mr. Reid said his company, owned 51 per cent by Bahrain's Kanoo family and 49 per cent by Britain's Norwich Union, lost around 250,000 dinars (\$662,500) from Sunday's fires including significant smoke damage to the firm's offices.

Offices of the Bahrain Norwich Union Insurance Company were damaged when fire gutted the Kanoo building Sunday. Several stores in the building located in the business district of Manama were also heavily damaged.

The owner of a music shop, Sharokh Akhtar Zadeh, said 300,000 dinars of

damage was caused by fire which gutted his Moon Stores Sunday.

Insurance officials said insurance firms in Bahrain had yet to define and tackle sabotage and terrorism affecting their industry. "The matter is still under discussion by the BIA (Bahrain Insurance Association)," one official said.

BIA members paid eight million dinars in property damage and loss in 1995, up from 1.4 million in 1994.

Anti-government protests in support of demands for political and economic reforms erupted in Bahrain in December 1994. At least 25 people have been killed in the disturbances.

U.S., Jordan examine trade ties, barriers

By Francesca Ciriaci

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanian businessmen and American officials have given a positive account of in late February. Jordan Trade Association's (JTA's) mission to the U.S. However, they identified insufficient protection of intellectual property rights, highly protectionist customs policies and barriers to Middle Eastern regional trade as major obstacles to the development of U.S.-Jordanian commercial relations.

In a briefing held Sunday at the American embassy on the forthcoming fourth annual American Promotion Week, Counsellor for economic and commercial affairs at the U.S. embassy, Gary Grappo and JTA Vice chairman Fawaz Sha'lan said U.S. companies look at Jordan as a serious market, but many measures should be taken to boost bilateral exchanges.

"We are discussing with increasing frequency with the Jordanian government the issue of intellectual property rights, particularly in the case of software," Mr. Grappo said.

He pointed out that "many Jordanian business people would be interested in writing software, both in Arabic and English but they are very concerned because, under the current protection standards, they are fearful of not receiving adequate protection standards for their products."

Mr. Grappo also said that "software companies, (which) could do more but do not, because of lack of adequate protection" are just an example. "A number of U.S. firms have expressed interest in licensing or establishing joint ventures with Jordanian pharmaceutical companies, but, because of inadequate protection, these could not be finalised," he said.

"When we argue for greater protection of property rights, obviously we are trying to preserve a U.S. business interest, but we have also always said that the protection of patents and intellectual property is in the interest of everyone concerned," Mr. Grappo added.

During Mr. Grappo's and Mr. Sha'lan's presentations and the following remarks by the audience, which included some among the most prominent Jordanian businessmen, the government was blamed for its "antiquated" customs duty policy.

Referring specifically to the duties policy with regard to automobiles, and reporting complaints by agents of U.S. automobiles in Jordan, Mr. Grappo pointed out that "Jordan is one of the very few countries where middle class people can not afford to buy a new car."

As opposed to the government's current policy of levying the duties on the basis of the size of the engine, the calculation of import duties on the basis of pollutants emerged from the debate as a more reasonable system for imposing import duties.

Underlining the fact that the main reason of U.S. firms' interest in the Jordanian market is their perception of it as only a springboard for some other markets available in the region, trade barriers between Jordan and some of its neighbouring countries appeared to the participants in the debate as a significant problem.

"There is a clear trend based on our data that U.S. companies look at Jordan as a serious market because of its location in the Middle East and a springboard for the West Bank, Israel, Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf," Mr. Grappo said.

But, he added, that due to regional trade barriers, "it is easier for Jordan and the U.S. to do business with each other than doing business from Jordan to neighbouring countries."

Talking about last February's JTA's trade mission to the U.S., Mr. Sha'lan said that "the response (by U.S. counterparts) and results were great."

"Technical transfer agreements, accords to manufacture under license or under label for distribution in the Middle East, and direct sale agreements were signed" by the small team of 12 companies which formed the JTA mission to the U.S., Mr. Sha'lan said.

According to Mr. Sha'lan, the delegation held meetings with officials at the Department of State, the Arab-American Chamber of Commerce, the U.S.-Arab businessmen and professionals associations, in addition to over 100 bilateral meetings with U.S. counterparts.

"We did not try to sell a finished product," Mr. Sha'lan said, but to see what we can do together. We found that they often have the technology and the marketing capabilities which we do not have."

DAILY BEAT

A review of news from the Arabic press

Al Nisr Al Arabi distributing dividends at a rate of 20 per cent

★ ★ DIVIDENDS AMOUNTING TO JD 200,000 are being distributed at a rate of 20 per cent to the shareholders of the Al Nisr Al Arabi Insurance Company following the approval of the 1995 financial accounts by the general assembly. According to the annual report, the company boosted its earnings from premiums by 26 per cent as it achieved a gross income of JD 4.13 million JD 3.28 million in 1994 half of which were premiums obtained by the life department with the other 50 per cent collected by the other sections of the company. However, the net after-tax profit amounted to JD 403,949 (JD 286,300 in 1994), 20 per cent of which were transferred to the voluntary reserve account, JD 106,940 were rolled over as retained earnings and the remainder is being disbursed as dividends.

The company, which is supported by JD 3.79 million of technical reserves, had a total of JD 4.79 million in investments in shares and bonds at the end of last year compared to JD 4.14 million at the end of 1994. These investments gave the company JD 73,435 in returns and JD 42,504 from trading in shares and stocks. Shareholders' equity at the end of 1995 amounted to JD 1.87 million while the balance sheet had a total of JD 7.57 million compared to JD 6.3 million at the end of 1994 (Al Dustour + Al Aswaq + Al Ra'i).

Jordan Industrial Resources Company shows giant leap in sales, profit

★ ★ A GIANT LEAP in sales and profit was achieved by the Jordan Industrial Resources Company (JIRC) last year as they jumped by 265 per cent and 290 per cent over the amounts recorded by the company in the preceding year. Sales shot up from JD 36 million in 1994 to JD 9.8 million in 1995 and net profit surged from JD 168,000 to over JD 650,000. Ramzi Muasher, JIRC's board chairman, told the general assembly that the company was able to boost its sales despite sharply higher prices for the raw materials used by the company. He pointed out that to lower costs, the board decided to borrow \$2.5 million from the Islamic Bank at about 5.5 per cent annual interest to finance the imports of raw materials. The loan is to be repaid after 18 months from the date of the bank's payment of the raw material costs.

Dr. Muasher revealed that the JIRC was contacting Syria and Iraq to set up industries in those countries to complement its present industries and noted that Syria has given exemptions to set up such industries. He said that the company was carrying out feasibility studies to invest also in Egypt. According to JIRC general manager Omar Shaaban, the company has JD 5.4 million worth of contracts to sell products to Syria and Iraq this year.

On the technical side, the company has started to install the equipment needed to expand the production of fat acids and glycerine and has finished building two extra reservoirs to stock raw materials at a capacity of 1,250 tonnes. JIRC has also resorted to purchase locally-manufactured spare parts as such a process would enable the company to make substantial savings in costs. On the financial side, the company's balance sheet at the end of 1995 show total assets increasing by 17.5 per cent to JD 15.2 million (JD 12.9 million in 1994) of which JD 2.5 million are fixed assets. Shareholders' net equity stood at JD 10.9 million, current liabilities at JD 2.6 million and long-term liabilities at JD 1.7 million (Al Aswaq + Al Ra'i + Al Dustour).

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Swedish men's table tennis double Jan-Ove Waldner (right) and Joergen Persson celebrate their victory of the Table Tennis European Championships in Bratislava May 6 (Reuters photo)

European Table Tennis Championship

Saive bows out as Waldner leads Swedes

BRATISLAVA (AFP) — Olympic champion Jan-Ove Waldner won a repeat of the Barcelona final against Jean-Philippe Gatin in the European Championships on Tuesday to move within one win of capturing the only major title to have eluded him.

The Swede beat the Frenchman 25-21, 17-21, 21-17, 21-6 to ensure the title will return to Scandinavia because Waldner plays Swedish compatriot Jorgen Persson, the 1991 world champion, in the final.

The eighth seeded Persson beat fellow Swede Peter Karlsson 21-13, 21-18, 24-22 after saving two game points in the third game in the other semifinal.

"We have achieved everything we came here to do — the team title and now the men's singles title. I am very happy," said Swedish head coach Soren Ahlen.

Third-seeded Hungarian Kristina Toth beat Chinese-born Jie Schopp of Germany and plays top-seeded German Nicole Struse in the women's final.

Gatin, who had held five match points against Waldner in the European team final five days previously, again looked capable of beating the second seed. He took an early lead as he scored heavily with his super-quick forehand hits.

But almost as soon as the Olympic silver medalist reached game point at 20-18 there came a similar sequence to that which had denied

Gatin in the team final. Waldner won a spectacular "loop-the-loop" rally of topspin forehand exchanges to save the first game point, and went on to save five altogether, before snatching the first game with a tricky spin serve and penetrating forehand follow-up.

Although Gatin came back to win the second game with some good backhand hits after Waldner had produced an erratic sequence on his serve from 14-16, the feeling had been recreated that when the Olympic champion really needed points he could probably get them.

Sure enough, from 18-17 in the third game Waldner took three in a row quickly, thanks principally to his brilliant serves — and not long after that the match was finished as a contest.

Waldner rapidly established a five-point lead by the middle of the fourth game Gatin had given up hope, letting the last few points go with a series of fatalistically over-ambitious attacks.

On this evidence Waldner, at the age of 30, is more than good enough to repeat the victory he had over Persson in the 1989 world final in Dortmund, although Persson — who beat Waldner in the 1991 final in Chiba, Japan — looks to be playing better than at any time for three years.

He was always too fluent for the hard-working Karlsson who the night before had upset the top-seeded holder

Jean-Michel Saive in the third round of a day which had started 13 hours previously.

Persson — apparently completely recovered from the car accident of two years ago — was comfortable attacking close to the table and defending away from it.

Although he had a spectacular fall through the barriers early in the second game he immediately recovered and might have won more easily had he not relaxed a little at 13-9 in the third game.

The Hungarian followed her conquests of two Romanians, the giantkiller Mihaela Steff and the former European top 12 champion Emilia Ciosu, by beating Jie Schopp.

Toth, who had been a game up and 15-11 ahead in the second game and a loser in three games to the Chinese-born German in last Wednesday's team final, did not allow her opponent to escape for a second time.

The third-seeded Schopp was two games down in the best-of-five against the 22-year-old left-hander from Budapest — but this time was only able to fight her way back to parity.

At the start of the fifth Toth regained the initiative by snatching four points from Schopp's first five-point service sequences and quickly built up a large lead.

That gave her the confidence to attack her way more forcefully through Schopp's Web of sliced, chopped and floated defence and Toth went on to win 21-15, 21-12, 11-21, 18-21, 21-8.

Toth now plays top-seeded Struse. She looked as though she might be suffering from a reaction to her dramatic marathon win over the Chinese-born European top 12 champion from Luxembourg Ni Xia-Lian.

Sonics net 20 three-pointers to down Rockets

SEATTLE (R) — The Seattle SuperSonics turned into sharpshooters Monday, setting an NBA playoff record with 20 three-pointers in a 105-101 win over the defending champion Houston Rockets to take a 2-0 lead in the Western Conference semifinals.

Detlef Schrempf scored 21 points to lead the Sonics, who shot a blistering 20-of-27 from the three-point line. Game three of the best-of-seven series is Friday at Houston.

"We know these guys are the champions," said Seattle sub Nate McMillan, who was a perfect 5-of-5 from long

distance. "We're not going to relax going down to Houston."

The Rockets, who have lost 11 games in a row to Seattle since the 1994 season, are no strangers to playoff adversity.

Houston has trailed in four of the eight series they have won in capturing the last two NBA titles. Houston trailed Phoenix 2-0 and 3-1 in the conference semifinals last year and won in seven games.

In honing in from long range, the Sonics beat the Rockets at their own game as they broke Houston's mark of 19 set last year against Utah.

Seattle sank 13 in a row in

one stretch and 10-of-13 bombs in the second half, when they erased a 10-point deficit.

Sam Perkins' three-pointer with 2:11 to play set the record and gave Seattle a 103-99 lead, but Mario Elie's basket 19 seconds later pulled

the ball stripped by guard Gary Payton — named Monday as the NBA's defensive player of the year.

Shawn Kemp sank two free throws with 10 seconds left to seal the victory.

"We knew they would go into Hakeem, so I stock my hand in there and knocked the ball loose," said Payton. Payton added 18 points for the Sonics, who handed Houston its worst playoff loss ever in the series opener but trailed for much of this game.

Clyde Drexler scored 19 points and Hakeem Olajuwon added 17 for Houston, which made 13 three-pointers.

The 33 three-pointers set

an NBA record for three-pointers by both teams, previously set by Houston and Utah last season when they combined for 28.

Houston still led 88-82 after a basket by Mark Bryant with 9:18 to lay, but the Sonics stormed back with a 15-2 tear.

Hersey Hawkins and Payton hit three's to tie it 88-88 with 7:58 left. Olajuwon answered with a hook shot to give Houston its final lead but Schrempf made a hook shot and Payton sank a jumper to tie it 94-90. Hawkins capped the run with a three-pointer for a 97-90 lead with 5:17 to go.

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The 33 three-pointers set

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Wang in year's fastest 10,000m

BEIJING (R) — Chinese world record holder Wang Junxia ran the year's fastest women's 10,000 metres to qualify for the Olympic Games on Tuesday, the official XINHUA news agency said. Wang pulled away early to clock 31 minutes 01.76 seconds, well ahead of the previous year's best of 31 minutes 04.99 seconds by Portugal's Fernanda Ribeiro and the winning time at the world championships in Gothenburg, Sweden, last year, Xinhua said. The 22-year-old Wang, who set the world record of 29 minutes 31.78 seconds in Beijing in 1993, was ranked fifth in the world last year at 31 minutes 23.24 seconds. She did not compete in the Gothenburg Games. After talking up the year's fastest time in the 5,000 metres on Sunday, Wang ran the first 8,000 metres of Tuesday's heat in eastern China's Nanjing City in 25 minutes 01.11 seconds and the final lap in 64.77 seconds.

Cowboy's cocaine buy taped

DALLAS, Texas (AFP) — Dallas Cowboys receiver Michael Irvin was caught on videotape allegedly buying cocaine before and after his indictment on drug possession charges, a television station reported here Monday. KXAS-TV said it has videotape showing Irvin, whose trial on drug possession charges begins next month, bought cocaine two days before and two weeks after his April 1 indictment. The tape was said to have been taken by someone who called himself a security advisor to Irvin. Sources showed Irvin in a vehicle talking about a woman he had apparently just spoken with who had a large amount of cocaine and holding a plastic bag while speaking to a boy who said he wanted to be like Irvin.

No positive dope tests this year

BEIJING (R) — None of more than 200 Chinese tested athletes has returned a positive dope test this year, the China youth daily reported on Tuesday. "Since this year the Chinese track and field association has checked more than 200 people and not one positive case has been found," the newspaper quoted association secretary-general Huang Zhi as saying. China's sporting reputation was left in tatters after the 1994 Hiroshima Asian Games in which 11 of their athletes, including seven top swimmers, tested positive for doping. A total of 31 Chinese athletes tested positive for banned performance-enhancing drugs in the whole of 1994, an increase of seven over the previous year; prompting calls for China to be banned from international meetings. Beijing steadfastly denies sanctioning or even tolerating doping and has begun taking counter-measures against an epidemic that critics say has flourished amid poor management and neglect in China's sprawling sports establishment.



Abu Shakra launches ALLURE

Mr. Rami Abu Shakra, the General Manager of Abu Shakra Trading Agency, introduced ALLURE the new perfume from Chanel.

Mr. Rami Abu Shakra launched ALLURE by saying that every woman tries to find her own identity; a role in which she could express herself.

Today she can suddenly remember that such a thing as ALLURE exists.

Woman with ALLURE can be found on every continent, in every country. They are immediately recognised.

Mr. Rami continued by saying that there is a key to ALLURE, a key that makes it possible to enter this world that is so fascinating to women, so irresistible to men, this unique key is the perfume.

Perfume has a myriad fact. It is constantly changing like ALLURE, it possesses total freedom.

Mr. Rami ended saying: and now for the first time, ALLURE is a perfume.

Graf feeling like No. 1

ROME (AP) — Struggling off her problems, a remarkably confident Steffi Graf returned Monday to Rome to defend her Italian Open title — nine years later.

Graf kept away from Rome after an unpopular victory over crowd favourite Gabriela Sabatini in 1987, her one and only appearance at the Foro Italico.

Returning as top seed in a field that includes four of the top five ranked women in the world, Graf sounded untroubled by her physical problems, pressure from the German tax charges against her father and a tough draw in the tournament.

"Sure it's a bit tougher than the other half," she said of possible meetings with both No. 3 Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and No. 2 Conchita Martinez. "But my approach to a tournament is you have to be able to beat anybody if you want to win."

With the eight top seeds receiving first round byes, Graf held a morning practice session on the newly inaugurated centre court, then changed into a black sweater and long skirt for a visit to St. Peter's Basilica and other sights she missed over the years.

Her long absence was blamed on scheduling conflicts and a misunderstanding with the crowds and the media. When an Italian newspaper called her "brutta," meaning ugly, the German media turned it into an issue of national honour.

The \$926,000 tournament is Graf's European clay court debut as she prepares for the French Open, the only Grand Slam played on clay.

She comes in with a perfect 11-0 tournament match record and two titles — both won on cement — since she returned to tennis in March following foot surgery in December.

"Physically, I have had better moments, with my back in this condition it is difficult to prepare as much as I'd like," Graf said.

"But the way I play, my tactics and my mental



approach to games, I don't think could be better."

The German actually shares the No. 1 ranking with Monica Seles, who has been protected by the WTA Tour since she resumed play after being stabbed in a tournament in Germany in 1994.

Since winning the Australian Open in January, however, Seles has played little tennis because of a shoulder injury that led her to pass up Rome.

Graf's physical problems have cut back on her tournament time, but when she has played she has been nearly unbeatable, winning three Grand Slams in the last 18 months.

"I think I deserve it," she said of her No. 1 ranking. Graf has held the No. 1 spot 331 weeks in her career, tying her with Martina Navratilova for the record.

The only hint of fragility

came when a reporter asked Graf if she would like to see movie about her life.

"It would be surely amusing, but I would have to open up too much, which I'm not happy doing," Graf replied. "I would like it to end in the middle, not with my death. Life is too beautiful."

The first seed through to Monday was No. 14 Joanne Kruger of South Africa, who defeated Maria Jose Gaidano of Argentina.

No. 16 Barbara Schett of Austria beat Lea Gharard of France 6-2, 6-3 in the first round. The 12th seeded Testud of France ousted Adriana Serra-Zanetti 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 in the fifth of 12 Italian entries eliminated.

No. 13 Lindsay Lee of the United States rallied past countrywoman Sandra Cecchi 1-6, 6-2, 6-4 in the day's final match.

Russia's Romantsev has presided over quiet soccer revolution

MOSCOW (R) — Russia, victorious in 12 of their last 13 matches, are heading for Euro 96 confident that for once they can produce the goods when it matters most.

Since the Soviet Union became the first winners of what is now the European Championship in 1960, Russian and Soviet sides have often shown plenty of promise but failed to live up to expectations on the big way.

But under coach Oleg Romantsev the Russian bear has started to grow.

Since he took charge after a disastrous World Cup campaign in 1994 Russia have been beaten only twice in 18 matches and rattled up 34 goals to finish unbeaten at the top of their qualifying group for the June finals.

Critics will say Russia have not faced any major opponents since losing 1-0 to Germany in September 1994. They also have a mountain to climb in England to survive a tough group which includes the Germans, Italy and the Czech Republic.

But their recent opponents do not doubt their ability.

"They are one of the best teams in the world... watch them do well in England. They are pacy and good tactically," Ireland manager Mick McCarthy said after his team were soundly beaten 2-0 by the Russians in Dublin in March.

Russia boast no single player on whom their success depends. Their improvement owes most to Romantsev, who doubled up as coach of Spartak Moscow until giving up that job late last year to concentrate on the national team.

He took over a team lacking ideas on the pitch, divided by a players' rebellion and low on confidence after being knocked out of the World Cup finals in the United States at the group stage.

Romantsev brought back into the fold some

of the rebels who had refused to work with former coach Pavel Sadyrin, although others remain out of favour.

"We have a new coach, a new concept, different relations with the team and have won 12 matches in a row, if you include friendlies," said team spokesman Leonid Trakhtenberg, speaking before a 0-0 draw with Belgium in late April.

"Our team had the best results in the qualifiers and scored more goals than any other team, I'm sure we'll reach the second round in England."

He would not be drawn further on the team's prospects but other team officials have set their sights higher.

"The team play a modern game and are ready to fight for the title in England," said Vyacheslav Koloskov, chairman of the Russian Soccer Union.

The Russians rely on good technique and move the ball around rapidly, although their defenders sometimes look unhappy in the air. They are a well-organised team but the lack of a genuine world-class player in any department could limit their chances.

Central to Russia's plans is Viktor Onopko, of Spain's Oviedo, who provides the inspiration in midfield or at the heart of defence. Winger Andrei Kanchelskis, enjoying out-of-club Everton, could also be a matchwinner if he plays at his best.

Dmitry Radchenko, of Spain's Deportivo Coruna, Igor Kolyvanov, with Foggia of Italy, and Sergei Kiriyakov, of Germany's Karlsruhe, are among several strikers contesting the places up front.

Of the players based in Russia, many hopes lie with Spartak Moscow's dynamic defender Yuri Nikiforov whose powerful shot is a potent weapon and Spartak team mate Ilya Tsybalar, a creative player in midfield.

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The closing date for submitting bids is 12:00 hours local time Tuesday 28th May 1996.

Samah Madani
Managing Director

Los Angeles long ball helps Nomo to victory

PITTSBURGH (R) — Greg Gagne capped off a night of long ball for Los Angeles with a three-run homer in the ninth to provide the cushion in the Dodgers' 8-4 win Monday over the Pittsburgh Pirates.

Raul Mondesi also connected for a three-run homer and Mike Piazza added a two-run shot to back the pitching of Hideo Nomo, who improved to 5-2.

"This is a win we needed real bad," Dodgers manager Tommy Lasorda said.

Mondesi hit his seventh homer with two out in the third off John Hope (1-2) to give the Dodgers a 3-0 lead. After Pittsburgh's Jason Kendall narrowed the gap with a two-run single in the fourth, Piazza launched his seventh round-tripper in the sixth to extend the margin to 5-2.

"I haven't been hitting real good, but I'm trying hard everyday," Mondesi said. "It felt good because I helped the team right away, and it gave us all more confidence." Nomo allowed four runs and eight hits over seven-plus innings, striking out five and walking two.

Mark Johnson brought the Pirates back in the eighth with a two-run homer to chase Nomo. Antonio Osuna came on and put runners on first and third with two outs before Scott Radinsky entered and struck out pinch-hitter Dave Clark.

Radinsky recorded the final four outs for his first save.

Hope gave up five runs and four hits in 5 1/3 innings for Pittsburgh, which was attempting to pull into a first-

place tie with the Chicago Cubs in the National League Central.

In Montreal, Pedro Martinez won his fourth straight start and Moises Alou and F. P. Santangelo each drove in two runs in a four-run first inning as the Montreal Expos beat the Chicago Cubs 6-2 for their third straight victory.

Martinez (4-1) allowed two runs and six hits, walked one and struck out 10 in seven-plus innings. "When I pitch like that, they get down and I get more confidence," Martinez said.

The right-hander has allowed just five runs — three earned — and 14 hits in his last three starts, covering 24 innings.

The Expos jumped on starter Jim Bullinger (1-3) for four runs in the first inning, sending nine batters to the plate.

In Atlanta, Steve Avery struck out nine in his first complete game of the season and Chipper Jones smacked a two-run homer in the third to lift the Atlanta Braves to a 4-1 win over the Colorado Rockies.

Avery (3-2) gave up six hits and did not walk a batter, throwing 74 of his 101 pitches for strikes.

"Avery was as good as it gets. He can't be any more efficient for focused than he is now," Braves manager Bobby Cox said. The Braves are 7-2 their last nine games and stopped Colorado's four-game winning streak.

At Florida, Al Leiter had a season-high nine strikeouts in 6 2/3 innings and Gary Sheffield drove in a run and



Los Angeles Dodgers' Hideo Nomo throws a pitch during National League action with the Pittsburgh Pirates, May 6. Nomo won his fifth game with the 8-4 victory (Reuters photo)

scored twice as the Florida Marlins snapped a five-game losing streak with a 4-1 victory over the New York Mets.

Leiter (5-2) allowed the lone run, eight hits and two walks to win for the third time in his last four starts. Robb Men worked the ninth inning for his fifth save.

"Leiter shut us down and the bullpen did the rest," Mets manager Dallas Green said.

Mark Clark (1-4) suffered the loss, surrendering all four runs and nine hits in 5 1/3 innings.

In Philadelphia, Doug

Drabek won his first game of the season and James Mouton drove in a career-high four runs as the Houston Astros decked the Philadelphia Phillies 11-5.

Drabek (1-2) allowed two runs and three hits with nine strikeouts in seven innings. Mouton capped a four-run fifth inning with a two-run blast, his first of the season, off reliever Toby Borland. He added a two-run double in the seventh.

Jeff Bagwell hit a two-run homer off Phillies starter Rich Hunter (1-2) earlier in the fifth for his 10th home run of the season.

European Cup Winners' Cup

PSG meet Rapid Vienna today

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Rudeness Paris Saint Germain will rely on player power when they take on Rapid Vienna in the European Cup Winners' Cup here on Wednesday.

The French first division team has turned its back on outgoing coach Luis Fernandez and president Michel Deniot and will prepare for the match alone following a disastrous spell that has seen their league title challenge collapse in acromony.

The players, lashed by Deniot for virtually gifting the Championship to Auxerre, have responded by training behind closed doors and refusing to speak to the press before the game against the

Austrians. They also seem to have frozen out Fernandez, whose relationship with the players has worsened in recent weeks.

Fernandez's decision to stand down next season may, indeed, have been forced upon him and his future position at the club remains unclear.

What is clear is that Paris Saint Germain, who called in France's Davis Cup tennis captain Yannick Noah to give them a 'motivational talk' as part of their preparation, remain the favourites despite the upheavals.

Fernandez said: "We will win this final. European finals don't come round every

year. We have been waiting for this one for 25 years."

The French side will go into the game at full strength following midfielder Daniel Bravo's recovery from a thigh strain. Out-of-form Panamanian striker Julio Dela Valdes is likely to be overlooked in favour of an attacking trio of Youri Djorkaeff, Rai and Patrice Lok.

Rapid Vienna, finalists in 1985 when they lost 3-0 to English side Everton, go into the game clearly relaxed about their prospects.

Midfielder Didi Kuehner even got married on Sunday, three days before the game, arguing it would be unfair to his wife to change the date.

Coach Ernst Dokopil made it clear who should be regarded as favourites, saying: "Paris Saint Germain are among the best clubs in Europe."

Rapid Vienna, Austrian champion 29 times, are simply pleased to have reached the showpiece.

Not only did the side pull off upset wins against Feyenoord and Dynamo Moscow in the earlier rounds, but they also beat bankrupt two years ago with debts of 10 million dollars.

Their rejuvenation could go one step further on Wednesday, with striker Carsten Koonseel of Germany their trump card.

Player's strike averted in Italy

MILAN (AFP) — A player's strike scheduled for this Sunday has been called off following a settlement here between the Italian league and the footballers' union, finalised in the early hours of Tuesday morning.

The two parties agreed to scrap transfer fees on players out of contract and to allow teams to sign-up eight footballers from across the European Community as well as three non-community members.

Police probe Newcastle riot videos

NEWCASTLE (AFP) — Police investigating a rampage by fans in Newcastle City centre started examination of security camera videotapes on Tuesday in a bid to track down those responsible for a massive wrecking spree.

So far 29 people have been charged with public disorder criminal damage and assault offences after the disorder involving more than 1,000 fans after Newcastle's failure to win the Premiership on Sunday.

Superintendent Peter Durham, the city centre commander, said the footage they were examining was of a very high standard and they were confident many more people would be charged retrospectively as a result.

He forecast the present number of arrests was at least likely to be doubled.

Damage running to many thousands of pounds was caused in the mini-riot on Sunday night after Newcastle United failed to win

their last match as eventual champions Manchester United beat Middlesbrough.

Cars were wrecked as drunken fans danced on their roofs and kicked out their windows, shop fronts were devastated and one of the city centre's few public lavatories was smashed.

Durham said he did not think the trouble put a serious cloud over the staging of some of the European championship matches at Newcastle's St. James Park during the summer.

Although drink was a heavy factor in Sunday's disorder, he did not feel the one-hour extension to licences in pubs, clubs and restaurants in the city at night would pose special problems.

"What happened on Sunday was a completely spontaneous event and we do not have any reason to believe the people coming to see the international matches will want to be involved in anything like that," he added.

Mariners rally to top Twins

SEATTLE (R) — Rich Amaral's two-run, pinch single in the seventh inning capped a four-run comeback that included back-to-back homers by Jay Buhner and Paul Sorrento as the Seattle Mariners beat the Minnesota Twins 5-4.

Trailing 4-1 entering the seventh, the Mariners rallied off Twins Brad Radke and reliever Eddie Guardado to hand Minnesota its fourth consecutive loss.

"Very good ballgame," Twins manager Tom Kelly said. "They had a good inning in the seventh, hit a couple over the fence and Amaral followed with a big hit."

Bob Wells (2-0) tossed 3 2/3 scoreless innings in relief of Edwin Hurtado to notch the win. Norm Charlton retired the final three batters for his fourth save.

Radke (3-4) surrendered five runs and six hits in six-plus innings, and lost his fourth straight after winning his first three starts.

Radke started the seventh but surrendered homers on consecutive pitches to Buhner and Sorrento. He then walked Wilson and Sojo singled to centre.

Russ Davis greeted reliever Eddie Guardado with a sacrifice that moved the runners over. Amaral then batted for Darren Bragg and lined a single to left, scoring both runners.

"We know we can score runs with the long ball," Mariners manager Lou Piniella said. "It is nice to see us use the conventional way."

In New York, Derek Jeter had three hits and drove in a pair of runs that capped a five-run eighth inning as the New York Yankees took a 10-5 win over the reeling Detroit Tigers.

Jeter was 3-for-5 as the Yankees pounded out 14 hits on the way to their seventh win in eight games. Paul



Detroit Tigers' baserunners Melvin Nieves (30) and Daniel Bautista (29) both end up at second base in the third inning May 6 at New York's Yankee Stadium. Bautista, who had hit into a fielder's choice and moved to second as runner

O'Neill, Bernie Williams and Gerald Williams each drove in two runs.

Bob Wickman (2-1) relieved starter Kenny Rogers in the seventh inning and allowed pinch-hitter Bob Higginson's two-run homer in the eighth that tied the

score 5-5.

"It's gotten frustrating. I'm just inches away from making the pitches," Wickman said. "I gave up a two-run home run. I thought I had him set up but he jerks it out of the ballpark."

ANNOUNCEMENT

After the completion of the rehabilitation work on the Madaba Archaeological Museum, The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities/Department of Antiquities would like to announce that the museum is ready to receive tourists and visitors as of May 7th, 1996.

All are most welcome.

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WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMINAH HIRSH
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WEST		EAST	
♠ 4 3 2		♠ Q 7 6	
♥ 10 6 3		♥ Q 9 8 2	
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♣ 9 5 3		♣ Q 10 7 2	
SOUTH		NORTH	
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strange ways from good technique. Consider this example. The key to North-South reaching the excellent diamond slam was North's decision to raise to game with a singleton queen. South decided that his prime values and intermediates warranted contracting for 12 tricks in that suit. West led a riddling heart, taken in dummy. The queen of trumps was cashed, and declarer came to hand with the king of clubs to cash the two high diamonds, discarding a card from each major from the table — had the suit split evenly, 12 tricks would have been there for the taking and South would have been playing for overtricks. However, West had a sure trump trick, so it seemed that declarer would have to guess the location of the queen of spades to get home. First, however, declarer tested another chance, crossing to the ace of clubs and ruffing the low club in an attempt to drop the queen. No luck. Still not content with trying to guess the spades, declarer entered dummy with the ace of hearts and ruffed a heart, then led a spade to the ace and ruffed dummy's remaining club with the last trump. The defense was dead. If West pitched a spade, declarer would cash the high spade in hand and West's trump and East's queen of spades would both win the last trick. But overruffing was no better. West would then have to lead a spade into declarer's tenace, resolving the problem in that suit. Making six-odd.

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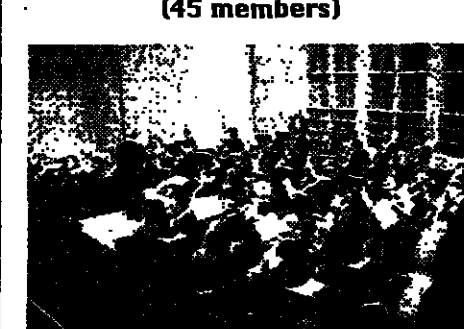
Noor Al Hussein Foundation
The National Music Conservatory
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presents
The German
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Saturday, 11 May 1996 - 8:00 p.m.
Royal Cultural Centre - Main Theatre
In the program pieces by Beethoven, Zemlinski and Bruckner.
Ticket price: JD 10

Tickets available at:
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- Freddy for Music, tel. 692696
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- Goethe Institut, tel. 641993
- Royal Cultural Center, tel. 661036
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- National Music Conservatory, tel. 687620
- Characters, tel. 07-927106
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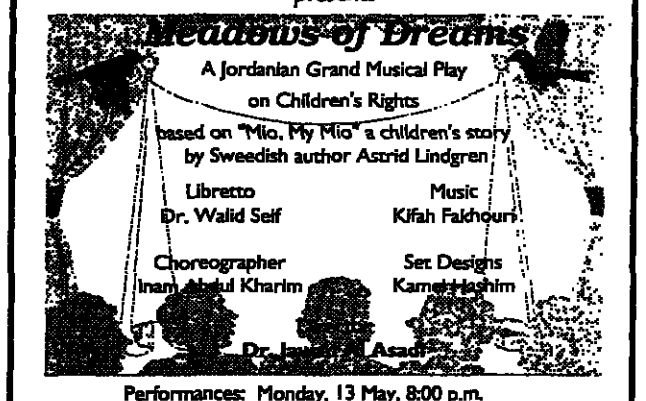
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The National Music Conservatory
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Brigham Young
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Sunday, 12 May 1996 - 8:00 p.m.
Royal Cultural Centre - Main Theatre
In the program pieces by Mozart, Copland, Ravel, Strauss and others.
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Set Designs: Kamel Hachim
Performances: Monday, 13 May, 8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, 14 May, 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
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TODAY AT PHILADELPHIA Alec Baldwin in The Shadow Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	PHLOX *The Heartbreak Kid Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 * Toy Story Shows: 2:00, 5:00	CONCORD CONCORD "1" * UNDER SIEGE "2" Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 * Ace Ventura "2" Shows: 2, 5:15 CONCORD "2" HEATE Shows: 3:15, 6:15, 9:15	Antonio Banderas & Salma Hayek in Desperado Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Nabil F. Hasham's Theatre PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights Starts Monday, May 13 at 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call 625155 - 640155
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Trials of Bosnia war crimes open

THE HAGUE (R) — The first international war crimes trial for 50 years opened on Tuesday with a Bosnian Serb accused of taking part in a systematic reign of terror against non-Serbs, described as "events of unspeakable horror."

"The evidence of the prosecution will prove beyond reasonable doubt that the accused, Dusko Tadic, committed the crimes... And that it was pursuant to a widespread and systematic attack against the non-Serb population of the Prijedor (area)," Prosecutor Grant Niemann told the tribunal.

Mr. Niemann, an Australian, said Serbs began a reign of terror in Prijedor in 1992 aimed at driving Muslims and Croats away and claiming the territory for themselves. He said the trial would examine "events of unspeakable horror."

"What man has done to man in the cause of nationalism or ethnic hegemony in the former Yugoslavia strains the most agile of human reason," he told the panel of three judges.

Mr. Tadic, the first person to face an international war crimes tribunal since the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials after World War II, is charged with killing, torturing and raping Muslims and Croats in and near the Omarska prison camp in Bosnia in 1992.

The accused, married with two daughters, denies the charges.

Dressed in a dark suit and tie, he appeared tense but waved to a person he recognised in the public gallery as U.S. Judge Gabrielle Kirk McDonald opened the proceedings.

The trial, likely to take months with over 100 witnesses, will focus on alleged crimes by Serbs against Muslims and Croats at Omarska and other places in the Prijedor area of northwest Bosnia.

Created by the Security Council in May 1993, the tribunal marks the first attempt by the U.N. to enforce international treaties on the conduct of war and protection of civilians.

Prosecutors allege that Mr. Tadic, 40, helped Serb forces round up thousands of his Muslim and Croat neighbours and herd them into three prison camps — Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje.

Mr. Niemann said atrocities seemed to have been conducted with the tacit approval of the Yugoslav national army (JNA) and local Serb paramilitary groups.

He said Mr. Tadic, a cafe-owner and karate teacher, had been active in Serb nationalist politics and as a reserve policeman visited the three camps at will to murder, rape and torture inmates.

Mr. Tadic was arrested in Germany in February 1994 after Bosnian refugees identified him as their tormentor. Since then he has spent over two years in jail awaiting trial.

Speaking by telephone to Dutch television on Monday, Mr. Tadic continued to protest his innocence.

"Absolute lies have been made about me. The prosecutor has accepted them blindly and has not taken the time to investigate a single one of those accusations."

Mr. Tadic said defence witnesses, afraid of arrest if they travelled to the Hague, would clear his name if they were allowed to testify via satellite from Bosnia.

The tribunal ruled on Tuesday that some defence witnesses would indeed be allowed to testify by satellite.

Mr. Tadic had threatened to go on hunger strike if the request was rejected.

In addition to Kirk McDonald, a U.S. law professor and federal court judge, Mr. Tadic will be judged by Sir Ninian Stephen of Australia and Danuk Lal Vohrah of Malaysia.

There is no jury, but defendants can challenge a ruling by one of the two trial chambers before a separate appeals body.

Mr. Tadic is one of 57 people charged with war crimes by the tribunal but one of only three held in its 24 jail cells.



PROTEST IN BETHLEHEM: Armed Israeli soldiers push back Palestinian demonstrators from reaching an Israeli military check point at the entrance of Bethlehem city on Tuesday. More than 200 Palestinians scuffled with Israeli soldiers during a march to protest Israeli plans to build a neighborhood for Jews on West Bank land seized years ago. The writing on the back of the Israeli soldier reads "Operations" which indicates the type of unit to which he belongs (Reuters photo)

Palestinian officials accuse Iran of training and funding militants

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Iran is training, funding and directing militants in attacks against Israel, Palestinian officials said Tuesday.

The claims came a day after Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres accused Iran of orchestrating suicide bombings in order to bring down his government and kill the peace process.

Mr. Peres faces a tough challenge in May 29 elections from opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu, who has said that while he would continue negotiations, he would make fewer concessions to the Palestinians than Mr. Peres.

Palestinian agents recently arrested 10 activists from the militant group Hamas who confessed that they were trained in government-run camps in Iran and Sudan.

said Brigadier Zakariya Baloushe, intelligence chief in charge of Arab affairs.

Brig. Baloushe said a Hamas representative in Iran has sent more than \$20 million to the Gaza Strip. The group has set up several "squads" with instructions to carry out attacks in Israel and the Associated Press.

The members of the squads report directly to Hamas leaders abroad, he said.

Brig. Baloushe said Iranian officials based in Lebanon have been giving instructions on carrying out attacks to members of another Palestinian group, Islamic Jihad.

Hamas has claimed responsibility for three recent suicide bombings in Israel and said it carried out the fourth one jointly with Islamic Jihad. The attacks killed 63 people, including the four assailants.

Another senior Palestinian intelligence official, Mohammad Dahlan, said his agents recently found letters in the possession of Hamas activists "that contain exact instructions from Iran and Hamas activists in Iran to continue the attacks."

Colonel Dahlan told the Israeli newspaper Haaretz that several Hamas activists were trained in Iran and Sudan in how to put together sophisticated explosives. He said some of those activists have confessed during interrogation in Palestinian jails.

The letters that have been seized mentioned several Palestinian officials as targets for assassination. Brig. Baloushe said.

Among those named were Brig. Baloushe, Mr. Dahlan, Gaza police commander Ghazi Jabali and intelligence chief Amin Hindi, Brig. Baloushe said.

The Hamas activists had planned to attack the police headquarters in Gaza City and Arafat's motorcade.

Brig. Baloushe said. They had also plotted to set off several explosions in Gaza city to create panic, he said.

Meanwhile, a senior Israeli officer told parliament's foreign affairs and defence committee Tuesday that Iran had delivered three consignments of arms to Hizbollah since April 27.

"These cargoes transited via Damascus and mainly included Katyusha rockets," the military intelligence officer said.

He said it was possible that a fourth sea-borne delivery had been made to the Iranian-backed guerrillas, a parliamentary source said.

The officer, however, refused to confirm or deny information that Hizbollah was arming itself with rockets with a range of 36 to 43 kilometres almost double that of the missiles which have so far hit northern Israel.

2 wounded in new blast in Bahrain

MANAMA (Agencies) — Two people were wounded when a time bomb exploded at a bus stop while police defused a booby-trapped packet of cigarettes like those used in a string of attacks on businesses in Bahrain, officials said Tuesday.

Two people were lightly wounded when an explosive device went off late Monday under a seat at a bus stop on Muharrarq Island, where the international airport is located northeast of the capital Manama, a government official said.

They were treated at a hospital, he added.

On Tuesday a "packet of cigarettes filled with explosives" was found at the Zeena shopping and business centre in Manama, but it was defused after the authorities evacuated people from the complex, a police officer told AFP.

The building was 20 metres from a complex housing foreign and local businesses, which was hit before dawn Sunday by several explosions triggered by booby-trapped cigarette packets, he added.

Shops and businesses in other locations were also hit in similar attacks that occurred around the same time.

Booby-trapped cigarette packets were also found Sunday at other businesses before they had a chance to explode and were used in a previous attack this year, the authorities said.

The Bahraini authorities on Tuesday issued warnings to merchants and residents to beware of cigarette packets and other objects that may contain explosives or incendiary material.

"Warning: A cigarette packet containing an incendiary device," ran a caption under a photograph on the front page of the English-language newspaper, the Gulf Daily News.

Bahrain's civil defence authorities told the newspaper that saboteurs had used cigarette packets set to explode with timing devices and issued safety guidelines to help merchants and shoppers tackle potential risks.

If a suspicious object is found, they must clear the surrounding area of people, turn off the power supply, spray the object with a fire extinguisher and call the authorities, according to instructions in the Gulf Daily News.

Traders should also watch customers to make sure they do not leave bags behind.

The U.S. and other foreign embassies have issued warnings to their citizens since unrest began in December 1994, telling them to watch out for unattended bags and stay away from burning fires because they may contain explosives.

But suspicion immediately fell on activists supporting a Shiite Muslim-led opposition demanding the restoration of parliament, dissolved in 1975, more political freedoms and job opportunities for the country's Shiites, who form a slight majority of Bahrain's 500,000 people.

The opposition campaign began in December 1994. Twenty-eight people have been reported killed so far and the government has rounded up hundreds of activists.

Iraq is violating sanctions, Clinton informs Congress

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton has told the U.S. Congress that Iraq has failed to comply with U.N. resolutions requiring full disclosure of its weapons of mass destruction and he opposed any easing of sanctions against Baghdad.

In a May 4 letter to Congress released Monday, Mr. Clinton said: "The government of Iraq remains far from compliance with its obligations under applicable Security Council Resolutions."

He noted that U.N. Inspector Rolf Ekeus remarked recently in Washington that Iraq may be hiding up to 16 Scud missiles probably armed with biological warheads.

"Iraqi officials blatantly violated Security Council resolutions in March when they repeatedly obstructed UNSCOM officials attempting to search buildings in Baghdad," the letter added.

"My administration will continue to oppose any relaxation of sanctions until Iraq demonstrates peaceful intentions through its overall compliance with all of the U.N. Security Council resolutions," Mr. Clinton said.

The letter also said "the human rights situation throughout Iraq remains unchanged."

"(Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein's unwillingness to comply with the norms of international behaviour extends to his regime's continuing threat to Iraqi citizens throughout the country," Mr. Clinton's letter said.

"It remains unclear whether Iraq is serious about implementing the resolution as drafted," Mr. Clinton said in his letter.

"Iraq remains a serious threat to regional peace and stability. I remain determined that Iraq comply fully with all its obligations under the U.N. Security Council Resolutions."

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Sanctions against Sudan are inconvenient but not crippling

CAIRO (R) — U.N. diplomatic sanctions which hit Sudan from Friday will be inconvenient rather than crippling and the interested parties have very different ideas about any tougher measures to make Khartoum extradite three Egyptians.

From Friday all countries must start to reduce significantly the size and level of Sudanese embassies and impose restrictions on visits by Sudanese government officials. International organisations will no longer hold conferences in Sudan.

The aim is to make Sudan hand over to Ethiopia three men accused of trying to kill Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa last June. Sudan says it cannot find them.

Diplomats in northeast Africa said on Tuesday that the sanctions were part of a gradual approach, a first or second shot in what could be a long campaign to break the links between the Islamist government in Khartoum and

foreign groups which advocate violence against their own government.

After another 60 days, if Sudan has not extradited the three men, the Security Council will decide what to do next.

"The sanctions are enough to show the Sudanese government the international community takes a dim view of its activities. They are certainly inconvenient and enough to make the Sudanese complain vociferously," said one Western diplomat in Cairo.

"They are on notice that the United Nations will not let this issue go away," he added.

But on either side of this centrist approach, the one favoured by Egypt and most European states, are parties clamouring for tougher action as soon as possible and others who say that enough is already enough or more than enough.

The United States, Ethiopia and the Sudanese opposition in exile have all

said that the imminent sanctions are inadequate.

"In failing to impose more meaningful sanctions, we risk further insecurity and instability for... Eastern Africa, the Middle East and Sudan," said U.S. envoy Edward Gnehm.

On the other side Russia and China abstained in the Security Council vote. Non-aligned and Islamic Indonesia, a Security Council member, refused to sponsor the sanctions resolution.

Even Egypt, the main victim of Sudan's alleged activities, has said it would not go along with an arms embargo, for fear it would benefit southern rebels, lead to southern secession and complicate Egypt's interests in the headwaters of the Nile.

Egypt surprised its allies at the United Nations last month by abandoning a draft resolution which would have imposed an arms ban and restricted flights in and out of Sudan.

Japanese cat finds \$1,500

TOKYO (AFP) — A Japanese cat has surprised its owner by bringing home a plastic bag with 160,000 Yen (\$1,500) inside, police said Tuesday. Kenji Fukui, a 73-year-old resident of Sate north of Tokyo, took the cash to a police station Monday. He said the family cat, Peru, came home carrying the plastic bag in its mouth, police said.

Under Japanese law, cash brought to police station is lost and found section is returned to the person who finds it if nobody claims it after six months.

Clinton chews cigars, but he doesn't inhale

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton, heading to an anti-smoking event, still chews on the occasional cigar but he does not light up, his spokesman said. "I haven't seen him smoke a cigar or heard of him smoking a cigar for quite some time," White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry told reporters. The last reported instance of Mr. Clinton smoking a cigar was in June when he and his National Security Adviser Anthony Lake puffed to celebrate the rescue of downed pilot Scott O'Grady after his fighter jet was shot down over Bosnia.

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